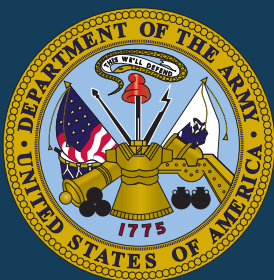


Joint Publication 3-61



Joint Public Affairs



08 January 2025



PREFACE

1. Scope

This publication provides fundamental principles and guidance to plan, execute, and assess public affairs activities in joint operations.

2. Purpose

This publication has been prepared under the direction of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS). It sets forth joint doctrine to govern the activities and performance of the Armed Forces of the United States in joint operations, and it provides considerations for military interaction with governmental and nongovernmental agencies, multinational forces, and other interorganizational partners. It provides military guidance for the exercise of authority by combatant commanders and other joint force commanders (JFCs) and prescribes joint doctrine for operations and training. It provides military guidance for use by the Armed Forces in preparing and executing their plans and orders. It is not the intent of this publication to restrict the authority of the JFC from organizing the force and executing the mission in a manner the JFC deems most appropriate to ensure unity of effort in the accomplishment of objectives.

3. Application

a. Joint doctrine established in this publication applies to the Joint Staff, combatant commands, subordinate unified commands, joint task forces, subordinate components of these commands, the Services, the National Guard Bureau, and combat support agencies.

b. This doctrine constitutes official advice concerning the enclosed subject matter; however, the judgment of the commander is paramount in all situations.

c. If conflicts arise between the contents of this publication and the contents of Service publications, this publication takes precedence unless the CJCS, normally in coordination with the other members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, has provided more current and specific guidance, or the Secretary of Defense has directed otherwise. Commanders of forces operating as part of a multinational (alliance or coalition) military command should follow

multinational doctrine and procedures ratified by the United States unless they conflict with this guidance. For doctrine and procedures not ratified by the United States, commanders should evaluate and follow the multinational command's doctrine and procedures, where applicable and consistent with United States law, regulations, and doctrine.

For the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Dagvin R. M. Anderson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Dagvin" being the most prominent.

DAGVIN R. M. ANDERSON
Lieutenant General, U.S. Air Force
Director for Joint Force Development

**SUMMARY OF CHANGES
REVISION OF JP 3-61
DATED 19 AUGUST 2016**

- Deletes Chapter V, “Visual Information,” and incorporates most of the content in the remaining chapters.
- Deletes “VI” as an acronym and standardizes to “visual information” throughout the publication.
- Deletes Appendix C, “Defense Media Activity,” because Defense Media Activity is not part of the joint force or organized as a combat support agency.
- Deletes Appendix D, “Joint Planning Support Element–Public Affairs,” and incorporates content into Appendix C, “Joint Public Affairs Training.”
- Deletes Appendix E, “Social Media,” and incorporates relevant content in Chapters I through IV.
- Adds Chapter V, “The Future of Joint Operations Public Affairs.”
- Removes use of “public” and “publics” and replaces and standardizes with “audience” and “audiences” to align with Joint Publication 3-04, *Information in Joint Operations*.
- Removes references to “truth” and replaces with “accuracy.”
- Updates vignettes to reflect more current events.
- Consolidates discussion of operations security to one location.
- Updates “military deception” to “deception activities” and moves discussion from “Information Forces” to “Public Affairs Considerations.”
- Removes all policy verbiage throughout the publication.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Overview

a. Joint Publication (JP) 3-61, *Joint Public Affairs*, describes how the Department of Defense conducts public affairs (PA) to communicate with domestic, international, and internal audiences to meet the joint force commander's (JFC's) intent and achieve operational objectives. Additionally, JP 3-61 describes anticipated changes to the future operating environment, and adaptations that may be necessary to adapt to emerging challenges.

b. Information in the public domain either contributes to or undermines the achievement of operational objectives. PA personnel understand that various audiences have differing information requirements. They plan closely with other elements of the joint force to make communication recommendations to the JFC on what, how, and when to communicate to achieve desired effects throughout the operational environment. PA personnel execute strategies and plans within the PA area of responsibility, primarily the information function, and work to synchronize public communication activities within the command and with other communications entities.

2. Public Affairs Responsibilities in Joint Operations

PA professionals work as part of a JFC's staff to research, plan, produce, coordinate, and assess public communication across multiple mediums to support the JFC's intent by reaching and informing intended friendly, neutral, and adversary audiences. PA personnel contribute to maintaining information advantage across the competition continuum by overseeing public communications activities impacting foreign and domestic stakeholders, and key audience perceptions. PA personnel also advise the JFC on the implications of command decisions and actions.

3. Public Affairs Integration into Joint Operations

The joint force integrates information into operational design and planning to conduct operations in the information environment. PA professionals design, plan, execute, and analyze public information aspects of operations, and focus on informing domestic, international, and internal audiences by synchronizing public communication aligned with command narratives and objectives. Additionally, PA professionals optimize outreach by identifying the most effective communication tools throughout the design, planning, and operations processes to create military advantage and achieve the JFC's objectives.

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CHAPTER I OVERVIEW

“We are not afraid to entrust the American people with unpleasant facts, foreign ideas, alien philosophies, and competitive values. For a nation that is afraid to let its people judge the truth and falsehood in an open market is a nation that is afraid of its people.”

**President John F. Kennedy, February 26, 1962,
on the 20th Anniversary of Voice of America**

1. Introduction

a. Public affairs (PA) doctrine and principles apply across the competition continuum in support of achieving objectives. PA is a part of the joint force commander’s (JFC’s) warfighting capability, a command responsibility, and should not be delegated or subordinated to a staff function below the command group. The public should perceive information communicated by PA as credible.

b. The United States (US) military has an obligation to communicate with its members and the US public, and it is in the national interest to communicate with international audiences. The proactive release of accurate information to domestic and international audiences puts joint operations in context; facilitates informed perceptions about military operations; undermines adversarial propaganda; and helps achieve national, strategic, and operational objectives. In addition to informing national and international audiences and potentially affecting adversary decisions, information can impact their ability to influence US audiences. JFCs employ public information as a warfighting capability against adversaries in support of objectives as part of the information joint function. Information is an element of national power and is incorporated into the planning, executing, and assessment functions across all missions.

2. Information in Joint Warfighting

a. Combatant commanders (CCDRs) conduct joint warfighting through joint campaigns and operations. Adversaries conduct activities across the competition continuum. These activities may cross combatant command (CCMD) boundaries. Each CCDR tailors and organizes their joint forces to their specific operational environment (OE) to face the threat across the competition continuum.

b. Applying forces to affect the information environment (IE) is a critical component, and sometimes a primary objective, in joint warfighting that enables military strategy and decision advantage. Joint warfighting requires JFCs to integrate forces throughout the OE, which includes all domains and the IE, to create military advantage. The IE is the aggregate of social, cultural, linguistic, psychological, technical, and physical factors that exist within a commander’s OE that affect how humans and automated systems derive meaning from, act upon, and are impacted by information. PA personnel recommend to the JFC what,

how, and when to communicate. JFCs enable PA personnel integration into mission planning and operations to ensure they understand the OE, actively participate in operational planning and receive intelligence updates, and help to create standing Department of Defense (DoD) public affairs guidance (PAG).

c. Technologies that reach across space, cyberspace, and the electromagnetic spectrum characterize the instantaneous and persistent global reach of information. This provides the joint force opportunities, as it does for adversaries, to compete for information advantage. Information advantage is the operational advantage gained through the joint force's use of information for decision making and its ability to leverage information to create effects on the IE. Technological advances enable anyone with a smartphone and Internet access to push information globally in real time, which contributes to significant changes in the IE, including an onslaught of widespread misinformation/disinformation.

d. Mass media is no longer the principal voice influencing key audiences. The abundance of information sources, coupled with technology such as smartphones, digital cameras, video chat, and social media enterprises, enables information to move instantaneously around the globe. PA personnel rapidly develop themes and messages to ensure that facts, data, events, and statements are put in context. Unity of effort occurs through coordination and synchronization of themes and messages.

e. The US military can reach various audiences without mass media and create the opportunity to join the conversation (as opposed to simply delivering a message) with an audience. Two-way conversation permits greater transparency and clarity—and often audiences want to be heard by US forces—but requires additional resourcing, planning, and assessment to carry on that conversation efficiently and effectively. Tailored communications address friendly, neutral, and adversarial audiences. Social media platforms provide a tool for the US military to reach various audiences directly and to receive direct feedback, although responses from bots, false personas, and malign actors should be considered. Mass media remains a critical way to convey information, in conjunction with statements and images on social media platforms. All means of communication are considered and used as necessary to achieve communication objectives. PA leaders focus communication planning, execution, and assessment based on CCMD campaign plan objectives.

f. The First Amendment guarantees freedom of the press, but within DoD this right is balanced against the military mission that requires operations security (OPSEC) at all levels of command to protect the lives of US or multinational forces and the security of ongoing or future operations. These competing goals occasionally lead to friction between the media and the military. The Privacy Act of 1974 prevents the release of certain personal information to the media but does not forbid individuals from releasing information about themselves in social media or elsewhere. However, individuals are still accountable to OPSEC requirements. In addition, stringent restrictions exist for protecting personally identifiable information, and there are strict reporting requirements if personally identifiable information is released, even inadvertently.

g. Many issues challenge the JFC's ability to provide information to key audiences at the same pace as the media and other sources (e.g., leaked information, contingency situations that adversaries create). JFCs therefore consider how to focus PA personnel time and priorities. PA planning considers reducing the time lag between an event and when information about it can be shared or a response addressing the event is publicized, to include coordination and approval above the CCMD level.

h. The tempo of operations, OPSEC concerns, and the number and variety of other information sources informing and misinforming the populace complicate messaging at the same pace as the media and other sources. The ability of anyone with Internet access to share information and provide graphic visuals without validating facts as an event unfolds further complicates the military's effort to accurately inform the media and populace. JFCs and public affairs officers (PAOs) should evaluate missions to identify public information and visual information requirements, as well as the means to acquire and move those products in a timely manner.

For more information on OPSEC, see Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction (CJCSI) 3213.01, Joint Operations Security.

i. People access information about the military and its operations from official DoD and other official government sources, as well as unofficial sources (e.g., information disseminated by Service members, distributed by the public, the media, or by groups hostile to US interests). Regardless of the source, intention, or method of dissemination, information in the public domain either contributes to or undermines the achievement of operational objectives. Official information can help create, strengthen, or preserve conditions favorable for the advancement of national interests and policies and mitigate any adverse effects from unofficial, misinformed, or hostile sources. This is true of key leader engagements (KLEs) both in the United States (e.g., defense support of civil authorities [DSCA], homeland defense) and abroad. DoD provides transparency within constraints of classification and OPSEC, irrespective of how public information release impacts strategic objectives.

j. Public support for US military presence or operations varies. The PAO, in conjunction with other information planners on the staff (e.g., military information support operations, civil affairs, cyberspace operations), should quickly and accurately assess the IE and public perceptions (attitudes) to provide valuable guidance and courses of action (COAs) to the commander. Such assessments enable the commander to better shape the message and inform relevant audiences about ongoing operations and engender their support.

3. Public Affairs and the Operational Environment

a. **General.** Public information affects the OE and operations in the information environment (OIE). Commanders, in coordination with PAOs and other subject matter experts, carefully evaluate how various friendly, adversary, and neutral actions, images, and words impact planned and ongoing operations—and they must do so with a global

mindset, not limited to geographic boundaries, due to the speed and global reach of information. PAOs understand that various audiences have differing information needs and work closely with other information forces and functional areas to ensure consistency of messaging and accuracy of content. This requires prioritizing planning and coordination across JFCs' staffs. By conveying the facts about joint force activities in a well-planned and executed manner, PA helps the JFC to impact the IE, particularly as it relates to public support and adversary reaction. When possible, the joint force coordinates its messages with stakeholders across DoD and interagency partners and integrates those messages with its partner nations' messages as part of the ongoing alignment to maintain unity of effort and resonate with key audiences' perceptions in a saturated IE.

b. The three tasks of the information joint function stress the requirement to incorporate information as a foundational element during the planning and conduct of all operations. The tasks are understanding how information impacts the OE, supporting human and automated decision making, and leveraging information. These tasks support all the other joint functions and provide commanders with the ability to understand how to attack, exploit, and use information to achieve their objectives. Persistent management and application of public information are key to persistently competing for advantage, which means prioritizing operational support.

For additional guidance on the OE, see Joint Publication (JP) 3-0, Joint Campaigns and Operations. For additional guidance on the IE, see JP 3-04, Information in Joint Operations.

c. Public Perception

(1) **Perception is Reality.** The impact of a first impression on the perceptions and attitudes of decision makers, leaders, and other individuals is easy to underestimate. First impressions influence perceptions and judgments, which bias how individuals process subsequent information. Additionally, information that contradicts first impressions may be dismissed altogether. Enemies and adversaries take advantage of this and often communicate lies or misleading information before we can verify details and communicate the truth. JFCs and senior US leaders should be prepared to assume some risk to ensure that public communication activities can be implemented in time to ensure the most accurate and contextual information is publicly available before misinformation or disinformation can be promulgated. JFCs should ensure PA planners are involved in planning and operations. When contingencies arise, working through the fog and friction that accompany these events to quickly assess and respond can impact public narratives. Failure to act can negatively impact support for the United States, and partner and ally operations cannot be an afterthought. The first side that presents information often sets the context and frames the public debate, especially if an audience perceives the source of information as credible. It is important to get accurate information out first to maintain legitimacy and public trust, even if that information portrays DoD in a negative manner. Maintaining legitimacy through disseminating rapid and accurate information helps disarm the enemy's propaganda and defeats attempts by the adversary to use negative information against friendly forces. JFCs should be prepared to assume some risk to ensure that public

communication activities can be executed in time to ensure the most accurate and contextual information is publicly available.

(2) **Timeliness and Repetition.** Timeliness is a key component of newsworthy information. Providing accurate and useful information in a timely manner increases credibility and relevancy. For information to have an impact, the audience should receive it multiple times and from multiple sources. Continuous public engagement throughout an operation provides the best chance of success in supporting strategic narratives and themes and in achieving operational objectives.

(3) **Sociocultural Considerations.** The joint force should know its audience to enhance reception and understanding of the message. News is produced by people who espouse the values and cultural system of the society they serve. News media coverage does not always reflect reality or accurate information but frames reality by selecting information or choosing what events to cover and how to present them. JFCs, their staffs, and PAOs examine sociocultural factors to predict how the presentation of news and information will affect key audiences' perceptions. Attempts to mitigate the impact of joint force or adversary actions on public opinion after the fact are often ineffective.

(4) **Impact of and Countering Propaganda.** Propaganda is any form of communication designed to lead audiences to specific opinions, emotions, attitudes, or behavior. It should not be assumed that all propaganda is misleading or outright lies. In PA, the term propaganda is used strictly to describe an adversary's communication (e.g., adversary propaganda), which may selectively present facts. While propaganda may mislead, it should not be assumed that all propaganda is misleading or outright lies—much of it can be honest and straightforward. Propaganda is compelling as it often uses elements of truth that make information newsworthy. Many people are drawn to reports or coverage of conflict or violence. Adversaries use conflict and violence reports to influence public opinion to further their objectives and minimize joint force effectiveness. Anticipating events that adversaries may exploit with propaganda can enable the JFC to mitigate the value of that propaganda through preemptive release of information. When operations do not allow for preemptive release of information, a quick PA response with accurate information enables the joint force to control the public narrative and support efforts to counter adversary propaganda. Timely use of visual information can often counter adversary propaganda. Examples include overhead visual information of pre- and post-engagement areas, which can be useful in countering enemy accusations. Coordination among a JFC staff and mechanisms for the rapid declassification of materials is paramount to countering adversary propaganda.

(5) **Media Landscape Complexity.** The type and diversity of media by which an audience receives information impacts the effectiveness of communication with that audience. The ability of governments and mass media to influence audiences has decreased with the proliferation of social media and other platforms tailored to specific points of view. The fragmented media environment enables the coexistence of multiple, conflicting narratives, making the complete defeat of unfavorable narratives impossible. The ability

to influence audiences in this environment is greater but increasingly complicated. For example, PAOs can no longer ignore unsubstantiated accusations, as was previous practice.

d. PA During Military Operations. The information joint function informs the strategic, operational, and tactical application and employment of informational power by enabling the commanders' range of options across the competition continuum. Employing the information joint function may be the primary option available to a JFC during long-duration cooperation and competition short of armed conflict, where the use of physical force is inappropriate or unlawful. PA supports military activities regardless of the level of conflict (see Figure I-1).

(1) PA manages and delivers public information and is synchronized with other information forces' disciplines as well as other PA personnel from US interagency and mission partners to create unity of effort.

(2) Throughout operations, activities, and investments, JFCs integrate information into joint plans and synchronize information activities with other operations to influence desired behaviors, reinforce or increase combat power, and gain advantage in the IE. Each joint operation has a unique strategic context, so the nature of information activities varies according to the distinct aspects of the mission and OE. JFCs may conduct OIE as an independent operation, but never in isolation, throughout all campaigns or operations and at any level of conflict.

(3) **Cooperative Use of Information.** During day-to-day activities, the joint force integrates information in operations by:

Public Affairs During Military Operations

Public Affairs

- Communicates United States actions/policy.
- Supports strategic narratives, themes, and goals.
- Furthers United States security interests.
- Enhances allied support.
- Deters adversaries.
- Builds partnerships.
- Provides operational context.
- Informs expectations/opinions.
- Counters inaccurate information, deception, and adversary propaganda.
- Articulates military capabilities.
- Supports military objectives.
- Reinforces military success.

Figure I-1. Public Affairs During Military Operations

(a) Assuring and maintaining allies and partners, widening/publicizing combined exercises and other partner nation cooperation activities, developing mutual trust and deepening the quality of our relationships, and promoting commitment to global security and stability.

(b) Informing enemies and adversaries of the potential benefits of friendly multinational force membership and collective defense, informing enemies and adversaries that the joint force is committed to its allies and security agreements, and concealing investment priorities and costs.

4. Public Affairs Roles

a. **Serve as Principal Spokesperson and Communication Adviser.** The PAO is the commander's principal spokesperson, senior PA adviser, and a member of the personal staff, requiring direct access to the commander. The PAO requires the knowledge, skills, resources, appropriate security clearance, and authority to provide timely, truthful, and accurate information, visual information, and context to the commander, the staff, and subordinate and supporting commanders, and to rapidly release information in accordance with DoD policy and guidance to the news media and the public. PAOs should be involved in planning, decision making, training, equipping, media analysis and assessment, and executing operations as well as integrating PA into all levels of command and ensuring message alignment. PAOs also work with other planners operating in the IE to coordinate and deconflict information and communication activities.

b. **Provide Counsel to Commanders.** PA advisors anticipate and advise JFCs on the possible impact of military operations and activities in public perception, or how certain statements and images may be perceived in preparing JFCs to communicate through the media and other channels. PA personnel also analyze the IE; monitor and interpret domestic and foreign public opinion and plan accordingly; and assess the impact of prepared public statements and images, providing lessons learned. PA focuses on the core information activity of informing domestic, international, and internal (i.e., US military members and DoD civilian employees and their immediate families) audiences. They contribute to the achievement of commander's objectives by putting joint operations, activities, and policies in context; facilitating informed perceptions about military operations; countering disinformation and propaganda; and correcting misinformation through the dissemination of timely and accurate information. They contribute to the development of constraints and restraints, the identification of potential intended and unintended consequences of planned actions, and an appreciation of the nature of information flow in varying cultural contexts.

c. **Lead PA and Communication Activities.** The PAO leads the PA staff and public communication synchronization efforts. This includes PA team and public communication efforts; participation in staff planning and leading the collaborative development of operational- and tactical-level narratives; and typically, at the commander's discretion, leading communication synchronization efforts.

d. **Support the Commander's Intent.** The synchronization of actions, images, and words contributes to the successful execution of the commander's intent and concept of operations (CONOPS). PA can provide a continuous flow of credible, reliable, timely, and accurate information. PA help deter efforts to diminish national will, degrade morale, and turn world opinion against friendly, and specifically US, operations. PAOs rapidly release information based on their knowledge, resources, and authority, in accordance with DoD policy and guidance, to various audiences to effectively support the commander's intent.

e. **Primary Coordinator for Communication Integration and Alignment.** As the primary coordinator of public information within the military, PA plays a key role in communication integration and alignment.

f. **Support to KLE.** Support to KLE is a critical part of the JFC's operation plan (OPLAN) and can facilitate both public and private communication opportunities. PA provides the commander insight on news items that could help shape the KLE. Commanders need to know if media will be present as a part of KLE to determine how the KLE will be used as a public messaging opportunity to various key audiences. Comments or feedback from the KLE can then be shared with the JFC and planners to assess the meeting or event. PAOs and staff should also provide commanders with information and updates on social media activity relevant to KLEs. Commanders should provide a meeting summary with supporting information to the media upon completion of community or KLE meetings and events as needed.

g. **Effective PA contributes to:**

(1) **Deterrence.** The credible threat of US military action can be an effective deterrent to adversary action. PA personnel, along with other staff members, assist CCDRs to plan deterrence efforts and convey possible responses to the adversary, potentially avoiding the need to use force. PA communicates the legitimacy of US military goals and objectives, what the adversary is doing, why international concern is important, and what the United States Government's (USG's) intentions are for its armed forces if the adversary refuses to comply. PA may involve highlighting the military's deployment preparations, activities, and force projections to show the domestic and international public what the commander is doing to prepare for conflict. When adversaries are not deterred from conflict, information about US military capabilities and resolve may still shape the adversary's planning and actions in a manner beneficial to the United States. PA is a critical component of the information forces, essential to successful integrated deterrence and contributing to commander's information objectives. Communicating about the US military's capabilities and potential use of force can contribute to deterring adversary action and maintaining the will of the American people and global partners should deterrence fail. It also targets international opinion of US partners, allies, potential partners, and neutral or unaligned nations and peoples.

(2) **Public Trust and Support.** PA builds public trust and support for the military's contribution to national security by providing the public with information

concerning the legitimacy of military roles and missions. This information helps sustain support for military operations.

(3) **Enhanced Morale and Readiness.** PA enable military personnel, DoD civilians, and their family members to better understand their roles by explaining the legitimacy of policies, programs, and operations affecting them. PA can help alleviate uncertainty and concern regarding Service member participation in crisis and contingency operations, living conditions in the operational area and at home, the duration of separation, the lack of daily communications between family members, and many other factors that impact morale and readiness at home and within the unit. Additionally, PA assists Service members and their families in preparing for media events, to include providing relevant, legitimate, and responsive information on topical issues. As global media interest expands to include human interest stories, military personnel and family members can expect the array of media to cover the impact of military operations on their lives and livelihood, to include their daily activities. Family members, including spouses and children, may be approached for interviews. This may have a direct and indirect impact on morale. This support requires planning and resources and should be incorporated into the command's planning efforts.

(4) **Enhanced Global Understanding.** JFCs should employ PA in concert with other information activities to develop and implement communication that informs global, and specifically regional, audiences about US military operations. This provides opportunity to explain the US narrative, as well as counter potential adversary information campaigns regarding US forces in the area.

(5) **Institutional Credibility.** PA are essential to preserving the credibility of DoD, and by extension the USG, before, during, and after a specific mission, crisis, or other activity. By adhering to the principle of maximum disclosure, minimum delay, PA is a critical component for establishing, defending, maintaining, and when necessary, repairing the reputation of DoD. The application of transparency, especially during crises, is essential to maintaining public trust.

5. Public Affairs Fundamentals

a. **Principles of Information.** DoD is responsible for making timely and accurate information available so that the public, Congress, and the news media are fully informed and may assess and understand facts about national security and defense strategy. Requests for information from organizations and private citizens should be answered promptly.

For more information, see Department of Defense Directive (DoDD) 5122.05, Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs (ATSD(PA)).

b. **Tenets of PA.** The PA tenets described below result in more effective relationships, help guide JFCs to conduct efficient PA, and build and maintain relationships with the media and other audiences. They provide baseline guidance, dispel myths, and provide realistic experience from communicating during the past two decades of regional

conflicts. The tenets should be reviewed and applied during all stages of joint planning and execution.

(1) **Be Accurate.** PA personnel release only accurate, fact-based information. The long-term success of PA depends on the integrity and credibility of officially released information. Deceiving the public undermines the perception of legitimacy and trust in the Armed Forces of the United States. Accurate, credible presentation of information leads to confidence in the Armed Forces of the United States and the legitimacy of military operations. Denying unfavorable information or failing to acknowledge it can lead to media speculation, the perception of cover-up, and degradation of public trust. These issues should be openly and honestly addressed as soon as possible. Once an individual or unit loses the public perception of integrity, it is difficult to recover. Visual information provides legal and historical documentation of military operations and events for official records. To ensure DoD visual information records are accurate, official DoD imagery is not altered to misinform or deceive. Anything that weakens or casts doubt on the credibility of official DoD imagery is prohibited. Alteration of official DoD imagery is prohibited with exceptions for corrections, modifications, and enhancements as specified in Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) 5040.02, *Visual Information (VI)*. The integrity of DoD imagery must be rigorously guarded.

(2) **Provide Timely Information.** PAOs influence the public by providing timely information. Late (but true) information is lost in the 24-hour news cycle. Commanders should be prepared to release timely, factual, coordinated, and approved information, including visual information, about military operations, in adherence to the DoD principle of maximizing disclosure of information with minimal delay. PAOs who release timely and accurate information often become the media's preferred source of information. PAOs should establish expeditious processes for release of information that is synchronized and integrated with operational planning. Delay in release of requested unclassified information is based on staffs balancing priorities. PAOs and staffs, in consultation with higher headquarters, should determine the advantage of working to declassify and release information and when to do so, as the situation dictates and based on commanders' guidance. In case of delay, it may be beneficial to release messages that reinforce enduring themes and indicating when further information can be expected.

(3) **Practice Security at the Source and Prepare.** OPSEC reduces the vulnerability of US and multinational forces to adversary exploitation of critical information. OPSEC identifies, controls, and protects critical information and subsequently analyzes friendly actions. DoD personnel are responsible for safeguarding sensitive information and should not disclose such information identified by the OPSEC process, whether through media interviews, social media, visual information, or community engagement. Official information should be approved for release prior to dissemination to the public. Likewise, as part of security preparation, it is important for interview participants to understand how what they say may be used. There are four categories of attribution for interviews: on the record, background, deep background, and off the record. The PAO provides guidance on which approach is likely to achieve the

intended goal and best maintain security. PA personnel should consult the PAO if they require further guidance.

(a) **On-the-Record Interviews.** Information provided in the interview is attributable to the source by name. This is the preferred type of media engagement.

(b) **Background and Deep Background Interviews.** For background interviews, information is attributable to a USG, military, or defense official, but not by name. For deep background interviews, neither the person nor the source is attributable, but the information can be used. The intent of these interviews is specifically to assist in putting on-the-record information in the proper context. When doing these interviews, it is important that the PAOs establish the attribution level as part of the ground rules for the interview. It is not unusual for the reporter, either during or following the interview, to request a higher level of attribution for specific comments. It is up to the PAO and the interview subject to determine the appropriateness of agreeing to any portion of the interview being at a higher level of attribution (deep background to background and background to on the record), keeping in mind that audiences often attribute information provided at lower levels of attribution to named sources in the same context.

(c) **Off-the-Record Interviews.** Information provided in the interview cannot be used for direct reporting with any kind of attribution. Off-the-record interviews are used when there is a need to give reporters a larger context for a subject or event than can be given with any level of attribution. Off-the-record interviews are not preferred by reporters as they cannot directly report from the conversation and present increased risk for PAOs in that the reporter could break the confidence of the interview. However, if there is a need to provide a reporter with greater context and to correct misperceptions and the only way that can be accomplished is if there is no direct reporting of the interview, then an off-the-record interview may be warranted. A reporter conducting an off-the-record interview agrees to more constrained ground rules and trusts the PAO and interviewee to provide greater context warranting the greater constraints. If there is any doubt that a reporter will not honor the constraints imposed by an off-the-record interview, such an interview is not advisable. Used judiciously by an experienced PAO, the off-the-record interview is a useful tool to facilitate accurate reporting.

(4) **Provide Consistent Information at All Levels.** The public often receives information from a variety of official DoD sources at various levels simultaneously. When this information conflicts, DoD's credibility is put in jeopardy. Before information is released to the public, the PAO ensures it complies with all applicable guidance. The Freedom of Information Act and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act processes guide PAOs in their responsibilities.

For more information, see DoDD 5400.07, DoD Freedom of Information Act Program.

(5) **Tell the DoD Story.** Although commanders designate specific military personnel or DoD civilian employees as official spokespersons, they should educate and encourage military and civilian employees to tell the DoD story by providing them with

information that is appropriate to share. By projecting confidence and commitment during interviews or in talking to family and friends, DoD personnel can help promote public understanding of military operations and activities. Social media has become a popular means for Service members to tell their story and can be an important means of validating official releases of information. Social media posts should conform to DoD and Service guidance and consider OPSEC, operational risk, force protection or personal safety, and privacy. JFCs use social media as another means to communicate with various audiences. Official and personal blogging in local and regional languages may be helpful in reaching the local population but also poses OPSEC risks and is carefully monitored.

For more information, see DoDI 5400.17, Official Use of Social Media for Public Affairs Purposes.

c. Audiences and Stakeholders. The joint force communicates with general audiences but is also required to identify and communicate with stakeholders that can affect mission success. Continual assessment of the IE is critical to effective joint force decision making.

(1) **Audiences.** An audience is a broad group, roughly defined based on common characteristics. It defines a population that contains relevant stakeholders. Military communications to audiences are generally one way and are often indirect and without feedback. Audience examples include the American people; DoD military, civilians, contractors, and family members; international, host nation (HN), and local communities; and adversaries. For joint force planners, broad audiences are not groups on which to formulate a communication approach, but the beginning of the planning process for determining stakeholders and assessing key audience segments. Stakeholders are part of the same system or environment as the joint force. More specifically, what stakeholders know, feel, or do has the potential to impact the joint force and vice versa.

(2) **Stakeholders.** Individuals or groups of people are stakeholders when they are affected by—or can affect—joint force efforts. For example, stakeholders could be key individuals in government, industry or commercial companies, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), or individuals who live outside a military base. For joint force planners, identifying stakeholders means early assessment of the IE and understanding joint force plans and their potential impacts. PA planners assess the need to communicate with stakeholders based on the extent to which they may be affected by—or might affect—joint force operations, actions, or outcomes.

d. Implications for Planning. The PAO and operational planners begin by assessing the IE. This assessment helps identify stakeholders and prioritize the use of communications resources. Assessment efforts should cast a wide net to successfully identify audience segments and trends in their behaviors. An understanding of joint efforts also enables PA practitioners to identify stakeholders, anticipate the development of audience segments, provide counsel to senior leaders, and prioritize the use of limited resources.

e. Narrative, Themes, and Messages

(1) **Narrative.** A narrative is a short story used to underpin operations and to provide greater understanding and context to an operation or situation. Narratives are an integral part of campaigns, operations, and missions.

(2) **Narrative in National Security Strategy**

(a) The national security narrative is formed primarily by broad national policies, as articulated in strategic documents like the national security strategy and national military strategy. More specific national strategy is developed in National Security Council (NSC) meetings and executed by the relevant departments.

(b) Sources of information for the national narrative include Presidential speeches and White House communications, Secretary of State speeches and Department of State (DOS) communications, Secretary of Defense speeches and DoD communications, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff speeches and communications, and CCDR speeches and CCMD communications. Sources of information for joint force themes should include the mission, commander's intent, and any other guidance contained within the warning order, planning order, operation order, and execute order (EXORD). This is not an exhaustive list; other official sources providing national strategic narratives can contribute to a joint force narrative.

(c) For every military operation, the President or NSC staff may create the national narrative to explain events in terms consistent with national policy. This guidance should be passed along to military planners and provided to the JFC in the terms of operational orders or other strategic guidance. The result should be a military plan that aligns both operations and communications with the national strategy and is consistent with the national narrative. A comprehensive narrative demonstrates how a tactical-level mission fits into the broader National Security Strategy.

(d) PAOs and their teams participate in staff planning and collaborate in the development of operational- and tactical-level narrative development. Narratives are an integral part of campaigns, operations, and missions. Joint force PAOs and staffs strive to provide a compelling narrative that is integrated into OPLANs and resonates with relevant audiences and segments by fitting their frame of reference. An effective and integrated narrative can mitigate, undermine, or otherwise render competing narratives ineffective if it is accompanied by complementary actions. Humans use stories and anecdotal evidence to help them derive meaning from their environment and experiences. Humans combine stories into narratives that they use to describe their version of the past and vision of the future and communicate that vision to others. A narrative can connect seemingly unrelated events and provides an overarching concept that influences thought, meaning, and decision making. Narratives evolve over time. A good narrative uses a range of stories that illustrate, animate, and validate its message.

(e) A good narrative gives meaning to a broader vision of how the world should and could be and why an audience should move in the direction of that vision. Humans perceive narratives as credible if they build on their understanding of the world

and their social environment to connect new information to the information they already have. Effectively using narratives can shape behaviors and even transform culture. See JP 3-04, *Information in Joint Operations*, for discussions of the joint force's use of narratives.

(3) **Conflicting Narratives.** Across areas of responsibility and during operations within a specified operational area, there can be a struggle to define the prevailing narrative at all levels (internationally, nationally, and within the operational area) on favorable terms. To compete with or overcome the adversary's narrative, diminish its appeal and its followers, and supplant it or make it irrelevant, the JFC should establish the reasons for and desired outcomes of the conflict, in terms understandable and (preferably) acceptable to the relevant audiences.

(4) **Supporting Themes and Messages**

FALSE NARRATIVES

During Operation ENDURING FREEDOM a premature detonation of an improvised device in Kandahar City resulted in many civilian casualties, but it was quickly and falsely reported to come from a Predator strike.

Various Sources

(a) Strategic themes are developed by the NSC staff, DOS, DoD, and other USG departments and agencies. JFCs support strategic themes by developing themes appropriate to their mission and authority. Themes at each level of command should support the themes of the next higher level, while also being consistent with USG strategic themes.

(b) Operational-level themes are related to the operational level of war (the campaign level) and are often created for each phase of an operation. Operational themes are nested with strategic themes and enduring national narratives to ensure consistency.

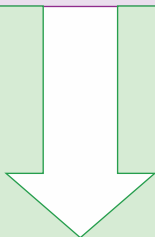
(c) Messages support themes by delivering tailored information to a specific audience and can also be tailored for delivery at a specific time and place, and by a specific communication method. While messages are more dynamic, they should always support the more enduring themes up and down the chain of command. The more dynamic nature and leeway inherent in messages provide joint force communicators and planners flexibility in tailoring communication with specific audiences.

(d) Domain, theater, and operational themes should complement and be deconflicted within the CDR's and USG's strategic themes. Theater and operational-level messages also support themes at their levels. This enables consistent communications to local and international audiences, which supports strategic objectives. Figure I-2 depicts how United States Southern Command established a strategic narrative linked to its longer-term campaign plan and global campaign plans.

Example of Strategic Narrative Linkage to Campaign Plan Enduring Themes

Approved Overarching, NDS Informed, Command Narrative (circa 2022)

"[US]SOUTHCOM's Enduring Promise to be a trusted partner is unwavering as we work together, dedicated to a secure, free, and prosperous hemisphere. We will support our neighborhood as we continue to heal together and fight off COVID-19, respond to humanitarian disasters, and provide assistance and aid with no strings attached."



Command narrative drives enduring themes in USSOUTHCOM's Campaign Plan as a trusted partner, putting integrated deterrence into action, and being on the field (persistently present in the area of responsibility). All talking points for any topic are nested within these basic themes and support the narrative, including component messaging, to ultimately help contribute to strategic USSOUTHCOM Campaign Plan end-states of shared values and greater opportunities, stronger security partnerships, and enhanced regional resiliency to enable stability and security.

- **Trusted partner.** USSOUTHCOM's enduring promise to be a trusted partner is unwavering as we work together, dedicated to a secure, free, and prosperous hemisphere. We will support our neighborhood as we continue to heal together and fight off COVID-19, respond to humanitarian disasters, and provide assistance and aid with no strings attached.
- **Putting integrated deterrence into action.** USSOUTHCOM's area of responsibility is at the frontline of strategic competition in the defense of the homeland. This neighborhood is our shared home, and we must continue to defend it together from cross-cutting threats. We refer to this theater as our neighborhood because of the physical proximity, shared economic interests and security challenges, and interrelated culture and values. Integrated Deterrence entails working seamlessly across warfighting domains, theaters, and the spectrum of conflict, other instruments of US national power, and our network of alliances and partnerships.
- **On the field.** We work to strengthen partnerships in numerous ways. USSOUTHCOM's ongoing engagement includes modeling professionalism through combined training and exercises and humanitarian missions. In fact, Humanitarian Assistance Program donations to fight COVID-19, from April 2, 2020 – the end of September 2021, totaled \$73.9 million comprising 528 projects in 28 countries.
- **Supporting talking points.** Our peoples have so many ties—geographic, historical, cultural, economic. The region together makes up the United States' largest trading partner (\$1.5 trillion) and has an abundance of natural resources (fresh water, lithium, rare earths, renewable energy, etc). As democracies, we share values such as the rule of law, human rights, and gender equality, and differing points of view. We will continue to invest in these enduring relationships through increased personnel exchanges, education, and exercises. We must be on the field together to compete and win against forces seeking to disrupt democracies and impose an authoritarian system in the region.

Legend

COVID-19 coronavirus disease 2019
NDS national defense strategy

US United States
USSOUTHCOM United States Southern Command

Figure I-2. Example of Strategic Narrative Linkage to Campaign Plan Enduring Themes

6. Public Affairs and Synchronization of Communication

a. **Overview.** The joint force implements the information joint function through operational design in planning operations that use information and leverages the inherent informational aspects of its activities and by conducting OIE. OIE are military actions involving the integrated employment of multiple information forces to affect behavior by informing audiences; influencing relevant foreign actors; attacking and exploiting relevant actor information, information networks, and information systems; and protecting friendly information, information networks, and information systems. To this end, for PA in particular, synchronizing public communication aligned to approved narratives is an integral part of aiding the success of campaigns, operations, and missions.

b. JFCs can use an information synchronization matrix, built around the CONOPS, which contains the phasing of the operation and enables planners to graphically display the activities, linked to the scheme of maneuver, that leverage information to affect behavior and impact the OE.

c. PA organizations and personnel focus on the core activity of informing domestic, international, and internal audiences. Civil-military operations, KLE, and military information support operations (MISO) also support these efforts. Synchronization of information being communicated focuses USG efforts to communicate with key audiences to create, strengthen, or preserve conditions favorable for the advancement of USG interests, policies, and objectives through coordinated programs, plans, themes, messages, and products synchronized with the actions of all instruments of national power. As the primary coordinator of public information within the military, PA plays a key role in the synchronization process.

For more information, see JP 3-04, Information in Joint Operations.

d. **Commander's Communication Synchronization (CCS).** JFCs can use the CCS process to coordinate and synchronize themes, messages, images, and actions. The CCS process aligns communication concerning the joint force's mission with the broader narrative. The JFC should determine who leads the CCS process for the command, but typically it is the PAO. CCS focuses USG efforts to understand and communicate with key audiences to create, strengthen, or preserve conditions favorable for the advancement of USG interests, policies, and objectives through coordinated programs, plans, themes, messages, and products synchronized with the actions of all instruments of national power. As the primary coordinator of public information within the military, PA plays a key role in the CCS process.

e. **Implications for Planning.** For joint force PA to optimally approach planning to synchronize communication for public consumption in support of operations, global coordination across DoD and the interagency is essential. An understanding of the joint planning process (JPP), joint force operations, and campaign and strategic objectives enables PAOs to:

(1) Analyze the IE, both specific to a particular operation, activity, or investment and related to global campaign objectives.

(2) Identify key audience segments and stakeholders within and beyond an area of responsibility, provide counsel to senior leaders, and prioritize the use of limited PA resources.

(3) Identify the desired communication outcome in support of related operational and strategic objectives.

(4) Research and assess stakeholders and key audience segments to prioritize information to support operational and strategic objectives.

f. **PA Planners.** PA planners develop the PA annex to plans and orders, to include support of Emergency Support Function (ESF) #15, as well as related PA documents. As information planners, they are also members or leaders of the JFC's information planning process.

(1) Functions and responsibilities of PA planners are to:

(a) Participate in operations centers and the JPP.

(b) Apply planning considerations to OPLAN appendices and proposed public affairs guidance (PPAG).

(c) Consult with HN governments to identify PPAG concerns.

(d) Identify communications infrastructure requirements and who will provide them.

(e) Develop an understanding of the OE based on the current situation.

(f) Identify information requirements when planning visual information and combat camera (COMCAM) operations.

(g) Establish imagery transmission requirements.

(2) In some circumstances, it may be necessary to have dedicated PA planners or create dedicated planning groups.

PA planners should see JP 3-04, Information in Joint Operations, for more on information planning.

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CHAPTER II

RESPONSIBILITIES AND RELATIONSHIPS

“Effective application of informational power must be more broadly understood and deliberately incorporated into the full range of DoD [Department of Defense] strategies and operations, activities, and investments (OAs) to support the advancement of national interests across the diplomatic, information, military, and economic instruments of national power in support of specific defense policy objectives. DoD must embrace a cultural shift wherein information is a foundational element of all military strategies and OAs, and where the consistent integration of informational and physical power becomes the norm. This change ensures DoD’s capability to positively affect the drivers of human and automated system behaviors, shaping operational environments, and reinforcing the strength and credibility of the United States.”

Strategy for Operations in the Information Environment, July 2023

1. Overview

a. **PA is a commander’s responsibility.** The joint force PAO plans, coordinates, and synchronizes US military public information activities, events, and resources to support the commander’s intent and CONOPS. The PAO advises the JFC on the implications of command decisions, actions, and operations on foreign and domestic stakeholder and key public perceptions. The joint force PAO, in conjunction with JFC’s staff, generates the information requirements to assess the perceptions of key foreign audience segments and integrates that information into mission planning. The PAO should plan for and actively engage leadership at all levels to get sufficient PA capability and capacity to execute the commander’s intent early in the operation, while recognizing that aggregate demand for such capabilities will be great and the PAO may not have the desired capacity.

b. DoD provides accurate and timely information and clear explanations of its activities and events to the public, withholding information only when disclosure would adversely affect security, compromise the safety or privacy of Service members, or is otherwise governed by statute or regulation. While audiences are broad and may be best reached through the mass media, stakeholders and key audience segments provide PAOs narrow and well-defined groups to be reached more directly with face-to-face communication, through very specific channels (e.g., e-mail, a particular newspaper, radio station, social media) or tailored communication products developed by the joint force. By removing the mediating effects of mass communication channels, the JFC improves the likelihood that messages are interpreted by stakeholders and key audiences as the JFC intended. The Internet also provides numerous options and challenges to communicate directly with worldwide audiences.

(1) JFCs should be attuned to changes in information technology and social media. Information can be collected and conveyed in real time and at low cost. The Internet provides fast and efficient access to a worldwide audience; however, PAOs need to be alert to Internet and social media restrictions in some countries and technical and

cultural barriers that may impact delivery of their message. Our adversaries also exploit the Internet through skillful manipulation of social media, imagery manipulation, blogs, and the use of artificial intelligence (AI). PA can counter biased, incomplete, or factually incorrect information with fast, complete, factual, and credible information.

(2) PA should be incorporated in every phase of joint operations. CONOPS should address the rapid dissemination of accurate information to specific audiences, consistent with OPSEC. One of the primary means of accomplishing this is allowing media access to cover operations. In consultation with their PAOs, commanders should expedite rapid release of information in accordance with DoD policy and guidance. The PAO should convey official DoD information with context that contributes to consistent understanding of operations and develops strong relationships with media.

(3) JFCs need timely and thorough coordination up and down the chain of command but remain aware that higher considerations may interrupt or delay timely release of information. When conveying the truth with context, PA staff primarily support the information joint function in joint operations. The goal of PA is to use accurate information to prepare for conflict by obtaining support for needed resources, approvals, and authorities; influence partners and adversaries; deter as necessary; and contribute to winning conflicts.

(4) The type and diversity of media and the context by which a specific audience receives it impacts the effectiveness of communication with that audience. As information travels globally and instantaneously, information is rarely contested. Effectively addressing challenges and communicating intended understanding to audiences and specific audience segments requires synchronization and alignment across the USG. Achieving strategic objectives therefore requires PA teams, senior leaders, individuals, and organizations across DoD and other USG departments and agencies to understand responsibilities related to achieving objectives in the competition for information advantage.

2. Public Affairs Lines of Effort

a. In joint doctrine, a line of effort uses the purpose (cause and effect) to focus efforts toward establishing operational and strategic conditions by linking multiple tasks and missions. PA teams contribute to achieving the desired effect through the core activity of informing domestic, international, and internal audiences. PA teams should focus lines of effort based on JFCs' campaign and communication objectives.

b. Joint force PAOs contribute to the effectiveness of the joint force through the release of coordinated public information (statements, responses, and imagery) in support of identified operational and strategic objectives. This activity facilitates informed perceptions about military operations, activities, and investments for both friendly and adversary audiences. The intent, depending on the situation, is to put joint operations, activities, and policies in context toward a desired outcome; counter disinformation and propaganda to contribute to truthful narratives for audiences who receive the information

and believe or trust it; potentially influence adversaries; and correct misinformation through the dissemination of timely and accurate information in support of identified objectives.

c. Coordination and synchronization of public information are fundamental to the execution of global campaign plans. This process generally starts with and is managed by the NSC (e.g., public information interagency synchronization meetings) and the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), with the Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff PA facilitating communication between CCMD PAs and OSD. In turn, CCMD coordination takes place in formal OSD meetings, through OSD directorates and operational channels. JFCs and their PA advisors and teams should remember that the civilian leadership overseeing DoD provides the final determination on what is communicated, including words, images, and timing. A failure to coordinate, or differences of opinion, does not override the fact that OSD, and at times the NSC, determines the final messaging for a particular area, event, or topic. The time necessary for proper coordination requires JFCs and their PA teams to prioritize planning and coordination at the OSD level and remain aware that higher constraints may delay or otherwise affect timely release of information.

For more information on the responsibilities of OSD, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Secretaries of the Military Departments, CCDRs, and subordinate JFCs, see DoDI 5400.14, Procedures for Joint Public Affairs Operations. For more information on related commands and support elements, see JP 3-33, Joint Force Headquarters.

3. Line of Effort Relationships

The following describes the organizations and people with whom joint force PAOs and teams coordinate, facilitating global integration, to support strategic objectives in defense of the nation.

a. **Intelligence.** PA is a consumer of intelligence and has a voice in the development, analysis, and classification of intelligence products. It is also the mechanism for coordinated release of unclassified information. PA media analysis and news summaries can contribute to the sociocultural analysis being conducted by intelligence analysts. As a consumer of intelligence, PA uses intelligence products to plan and enhance media analysis. Intelligence requirements are coordinated with the intelligence directorate of a joint staff (J-2). PA also makes recommendations to the JFC, the operations directorate of a joint staff, and J-2, to consider declassification of key information and imagery (e.g., from intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance assets and weapons systems' cameras) for release through approved classification advisory officers. The J-2's historical and human factors analysis provide a context to evaluate and anticipate adversary propaganda and disinformation. PA should coordinate regularly with the J-2 open-source intelligence section to enhance media analysis for the JFC and staff.

b. **Operations.** A campaign is a sequence of tactical actions with a common purpose or unifying theme. Actions within campaigns contribute to the achievement of operational

objectives. Most joint operations incorporate elements of all domains. Joint operations may also be global and transregional. PAOs' support to and understanding of operations necessitates consistent understanding and tracking of operations and close coordination with the operations directorate of a joint staff. PAOs also support operations directorate of a joint staff directors and members speaking with the press, in support of identified operational and strategic objectives.

c. Information Forces. The joint force uses information to improve understanding, decision making, and communication. Commanders use information to visualize and understand the OE and direct and coordinate actions. The joint force leverages information to affect the perceptions, attitudes, decision making, and behavior of relevant actors. Within each commander's OE there exist factors that affect how humans and automated systems derive meaning from, act upon, and are impacted by information. The aggregate of these social, cultural, linguistic, psychological, technical, and physical factors is the IE. The IE is not distinct from any OE. It is an intellectual framework to help identify, understand, and describe how those often-intangible factors may affect the employment of forces and bear on the decisions of the commander. Information forces are those Active Component and Reserve Component forces specifically organized, trained, and equipped to create, or support the creation of effects on the IE. Information forces aggregate military personnel, weapon systems, equipment, and necessary support that provide expertise and specialized capabilities that leverage information and conduct activities central to OIE. OIE units are typically composed of the following types of information forces:

(1) **PA Forces.** PAOs, as part of JFCs' personal staff, focus on the core activity of informing internal, domestic, and international audiences. PA is divided into public information, command information, and community engagement activities, supported by research, planning, execution, and assessment to support the commander's intent and CONOPS. PAOs also interact with other information forces and conduct information synchronization and integration through forums, meetings, cells, and other coordination efforts.

(2) **Psychological Operations Forces.** Psychological operations forces conduct MISO, planned operations to convey selected information and indicators to foreign audiences to influence the emotions, motives, objective reasoning, and ultimately the behavior of foreign governments, organizations, groups, and individuals in a manner favorable to the JFC's objectives. The respective activities of PA and MISO affect each other and require continual coordination.

(a) PA and MISO should be deconflicted during the planning process to ensure MISO activities are not targeted at US citizens. The JFC can form information working groups or cells for long-term operations. PA and MISO elements can coordinate directly when there are no joint coordination mechanisms.

(b) MISO are, by definition, directed against foreign audiences. However, MISO personnel and equipment may be used to support approved DSCA missions. DSCA may be supported by conducting civil authority information support. Civil authority

information support may include information dissemination, printing, reproduction, distribution, and broadcasting to deliver critical information. All civil authority information support efforts are coordinated with the lead federal agency, which is solely responsible for the content of any products.

For additional guidance on MISO, see JP 3-53, Joint Military Information Support Operations.

(3) **Civil Affairs.** Civil affairs conduct civil reconnaissance, network analysis, and network engagement to support, influence, compel, or leverage populations, governments, and other institutions. They expose malign influence, counter coercion and subversion, and impose costs through conventional and unconventional activities. While civil affairs gather and disseminate information in support of the joint force, they are not intelligence personnel and avoid association with dedicated intelligence personnel to maintain their credibility with local nationals.

d. **Coordination with Other USG Departments and Agencies.** CCDRs operate in a public information arena with interagency partners whose actions and information can affect public understanding of the facts. Communicating a consistent message that supports approved themes is essential during operations. All participating agencies and organizations need to establish and agree early in the planning process on procedures for media access; issuing and verifying credentials; and briefing, escorting, and transporting media members and their equipment. Within DOS, the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs plays a key coordinating role in this process. OSD interfaces with the CCMDs, normally through a joint interagency coordination group, and issues messaging guidance, which may include PAG. Similarly, the CCMD joint interagency coordination group representatives participate in planning and can be used to coordinate issues with the agency they represent.

(1) **Public Diplomacy.** Public diplomacy consists of overt international public information activities of the USG designed to promote US foreign policy objectives by seeking to understand, inform, and influence foreign audiences and opinion makers, and by broadening dialogue between American citizens, institutions, and their counterparts abroad. It is critically important that PA and public diplomacy are coordinated to ensure consistency of their respective messages and to maintain credibility with their respective key audiences.

(2) **Interagency Guidance.** Information from the interagency process, DoD, and various levels of command is disseminated through PAG or other means (principally e-mails, telephone calls, and video teleconferences). This guidance is essential to ensure a consistent message is projected. The guidance can change weekly, daily, or hourly as the political and military situation changes.

(3) **Country Team.** The country team consists of key members of the US diplomatic mission or embassy and works directly with the HN government. Its purpose is to unify the coordination and implementation of US national policy within each foreign

country under direction of the chief of mission. Country teams meet regularly to advise the chief of mission on matters of interest to the United States and review current developments in the country. The chief of mission, as the senior US representative in each HN, controls information release in the HN. The PA staff should coordinate all relevant themes, messages, and activities affecting the HN through the respective JFC staff and US embassy channels. The DOS foreign policy adviser at CCMDs can facilitate access to DOS and has reachback to resources for joint PAOs.

e. **International Organizations and NGOs.** Close coordination with international organizations and NGOs also can be an important PA responsibility. For example, if DoD is providing foreign humanitarian assistance or working to support the humanitarian assistance efforts of the United States Agency for International Development—the lead federal coordinator of international disaster assistance—there may be many non-DoD or non-US agencies (e.g., United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees or the International Committee of the Red Cross) involved. There may be public and media interest in their activities as well as those of DoD. Close coordination by the joint forces with other involved USG or international agencies (usually via DOS) helps ensure consistent information is presented about the total US response effort.

f. **HN.** PA planners consult with HN governments as appropriate (via established diplomatic channels) to identify local issues and concerns that should be reflected in the PAG. This coordination is normally established through the PAO at the respective embassy and in close coordination with information planners.

g. **Multinational Partners.** US military forces rarely work alone to solve an international crisis. Thus, PA planning should reflect the possibility of multinational partners joining in the effort. In addition to HN sensitivities, the media operations center (MOC) staff should be cognizant of multinational partners' concerns when communicating with the media and the public. Coordination among respective militaries for bilateral and multilateral exercises and activities is a key component in supporting the joint force operating globally. PA coordination for narrative development, including shared themes and messages, and the highlighting/publicizing of combined activities demonstrates to audiences the strength and interoperability of the combined force. Establishing a combined joint information bureau reinforces PA collaboration, and the products released highlight the depth and quality of these relationships.

CHAPTER III

PUBLIC AFFAIRS IN JOINT OPERATIONS

“ . . . [H]oning our warfighting skill has primacy in everything we do. That's why we exist: to fight and win our nation's wars. We're going to be so good at what we do that our adversaries go, 'not today, not tomorrow, not ever'. And we do that because we bring in our nation's best from all backgrounds. And I'm extremely proud of our Service members, every single one of them.”

General Charles Q. Brown, Jr.
Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, December 2023

1. Overview

a. **Operations.** Information is a constant in the OE and narrative competition within it is unceasing. While PAOs always consider ongoing competition in the IE, some joint operations have specific information requirements. In addition to planning all operations to derive benefit from the inherent informational aspects of physical actions and to influence relevant actors, the JFC has additional means with which to leverage information in support of objectives. Leveraging information involves the generation and use of information through tasks to inform relevant actors; influence relevant actors; or attack information, information systems, and information networks. Planning for OIE provides the means for the integrated employment of military information. The JFC uses various forces, operations, and activities to reinforce the actions of assigned or attached forces, support lines of operation or lines of effort, or as the primary activity in a line of effort to drive the behavior of selected target audiences or decision makers.

b. **Globally Minded Coordination.** DoD closely coordinates operations, activities, and investments with other USG departments and agencies to facilitate horizontal and vertical continuity of strategic themes, messages, and actions. This coordination improves the global integration of joint operations across the competition continuum and ensures a consistent narrative between the joint force and the rest of the USG.

See JP 3-04, Information in Joint Operations, for more information on authorities, responsibilities, Service organizations, information forces, interorganizational collaboration, multinational partner considerations, and legal considerations.

c. **PA Functions.** PA functions are part of a broader communication process focused on supporting the commander and achieving mission objectives. PA functions include providing counsel to the JFC and staff; providing PA training, research, planning, assessment, and evaluation; developing and disseminating communication products; communicating with stakeholders and audiences; and integrating information in the JPP. Throughout the entire process, PA:

(1) **Provides Advice to the Commander.** PAOs advise the commander on communicating with the public, including objective counsel on the impact of proposed COAs and policy decisions on relevant populations. They use research and analysis to

build a shared situational awareness with commanders and staff on emerging issues and public sentiment. They bring focus to the impact the joint force has on the OE and its stakeholders and audiences, improve responsiveness to public interests, articulate potential unintended consequences of planned actions, and quickly identify perceived disparities between actions and words.

(2) **Leads Staff Public Communication Alignment.** As the primary coordinator of public information and the narrative, PA is in a unique position to alert the JFC when actions, words, and images are not aligned and to recommend actions to bring them into alignment. The PA staff aligns public communication with PAG from higher headquarters down the chain to subordinate commands, and throughout the staff and with key stakeholder commands to include US and multinational forces.

(3) **Leads PA and Public Communication Activities.** The PAO leads the PA staff and public communication efforts.

(4) **Conducts PA Training.** PA training prepares commanders and members throughout the command to effectively represent their units, Services, and DoD in interviews with the media, when hosting embedded media or civilian visitors, in casual conversation with non-DoD personnel, and in social media. The PA team should be able to conduct a wide range of training ranging from familiarization for an entire command in an auditorium to focused one-on-one coaching for command leadership and subject matter experts. The PAO and PA team also train members of the joint force to increase their understanding of the PA mission, capabilities, role in the JPP, and support to overall communication effort.

d. PA Tasks

(1) **Research.** PAOs work with others on the joint staff and with external sources to proactively scan the IE to identify emerging issues with potential to impact the joint force. PAOs use quantitative and qualitative research to better understand and define problems and opportunities, the OE, stakeholders and audiences, and the cultural landscape. This information informs the overall decision-making process, guides planning efforts, and improves the quality of PA counsel and communication alignment. Research is used to anticipate and identify changes in the OE from a PA perspective, allowing leaders to adjust and respond, as needed, to ensure mission success. With increased knowledge of cultures, social and political structures, languages, and religions, PAOs better understand audience needs and predispositions and better design messages to increase audience understanding. This function is frequently under-resourced at all levels; JFC PAOs coordinate with the CCMD to obtain reachback capability, as needed.

(2) **Planning.** PA plans activities to support the commander's intent and command objectives. During planning, PA involvement begins with the first planning step and uses the information and knowledge previously gained through research to enhance the commander's understanding of the OE and nature of the problem from a PA perspective. This process includes consideration of lessons learned to help guide

operational design and assist in anticipating response to future events. This understanding shapes the commander's initial planning guidance and intent, which includes public communication considerations. OPLANs should include public communication considerations and activities from the beginning. PA informs and participates in staff planning, including the development of constraints and restraints, identification of potential intended and unintended consequences of planned actions, and development of an appreciation of the nature of information flow in varying cultural contexts. Supporting public communication plans highlight higher headquarters PAG and messaging, identify the public communication problem or opportunity, identify and define key audience segments, define public communication objectives that support command/mission goals, develop measurable objectives, and employ public communication activities appropriate to the situation and desired outcome. Throughout the planning process, PA personnel lead public communication synchronization to maximize alignment.

For more information, see Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Manual (CJCSM) 3130.03, Planning and Execution Formats and Guidance.

(3) Media Product Development and Dissemination. PAOs leverage technology to rapidly develop and disseminate communication products that support the commander's objectives. Products include the written word and visual information (photographs, video, multimedia productions) optimized for the intended audiences, distribution channel, and ease of sharing by the audiences to their networks through a variety of media. In operational areas, military journalists, mass communication specialists, or combat correspondents attach to units at the lowest level, providing commanders with the ability to capture, document, and rapidly disseminate unit actions to prevent and counter adversary misinformation and disinformation.

(4) Public Communication. Viewing public communication as a social process of dialogue and interaction among people, versus a technical process of delivering a message to a specific audience, the PA team proactively facilitates communication with domestic and international audiences (including key leaders) in all OEs at home and abroad. The PAO uses research and communication theory to identify and segment audiences and to develop creative public communication plans and outreach programs tailored to them. Public communication focuses on internal and external audiences and stakeholders. Additionally, the PAO should facilitate communication with representatives from both traditional and digital news media organizations. Public communication activities include in-person activities such as tours, distinguished visitor embarkations, media embeds, interviews, town hall meetings, speaking engagements, band concerts, and in-person conversations, along with interactions facilitated using technology such as voice phone calls, e-mails, video teleconferencing, and social media platforms.

(5) Assessment and Evaluation. Measuring the effectiveness of PA against command and mission objectives is an integral part of PA. Assessments and evaluations are used to enable informed decisions during future planning efforts. The metrics used in the assessment process may be both qualitative and quantitative. Resources may be organic to platforms or preexisting processes. Some examples include engagement metrics,

feedback, surveys, and media monitoring services. Evaluating the impact of communication activities helps identify improvement areas and justifies efforts. Assessment and evaluation should be included in all planning and execution steps, with feedback used to adapt and adjust actions accordingly.

e. **Considerations.** PA considerations for joint operations include:

(1) Military operations have a public information component whether desired or not. Commanders and staffs at all levels anticipate interest in operations as part of the normal planning process. Military operations are intended to support desired outcomes, and JFCs plan for public information to appropriately support those outcomes. Regardless, history shows military activities that include unit alerts, increased aircraft activity, rail or ship loading, and benign activities such as unusual food deliveries. They also send a message and almost inevitably lead to media inquiries and OPSEC considerations. Therefore, operational actions and words and images should be thoughtfully planned ahead of execution and increased social media activity. Communication planning also takes into consideration concerns of unit members, family members, and the American public, in addition to addressing adversaries as well as allies and partners. Releasing information or granting access to news media is often directed from the outset by higher headquarters or is subsequently directed when events become known publicly. Whatever the amount of information released or support to news reporting decided upon by a commander, it is not unusual for higher headquarters to direct more information to be released.

(2) **OPSEC**

(a) JFCs and their staffs evaluate OPSEC risks related to information proposed for public release. Security at the source is a guiding principle to protect classified and sensitive material and should govern discussions with the public.

(b) PAOs assess the potential effects of media coverage on joint operations. They work closely with operational, intelligence, and risk management planners to develop guidelines to avoid inadvertent disclosure of sensitive information. PA personnel are involved in OPSEC planning, surveys, and security reviews to prevent the public release of critical information.

(c) OPSEC constraints and the need to release information and imagery need to be balanced. Timing the public release of information and visual information can help maintain OPSEC. Best practices include ground rules to temporarily delay transmission of sensitive information to balance short-term security concerns with media coverage requirements.

(d) PA personnel consider OPSEC issues relating to widely available communication technologies (e.g., blogging, social networking, smart phones, streaming media) to communicate as a crisis or contingency is developing. The disclosure or public release of critical information identified in the OPSEC process is a PA consideration in crisis response, issue management, and PA planning.

(3) PA should be incorporated in every phase of operations. Consistent with current OSD guidance, and within the constraints of OPSEC, information security, safety, and privacy of US military personnel, their families, and DoD civilians, PA can:

(a) Provide accurate and timely information about US military operations and objectives to internal and external audiences.

(b) Support US and international media coverage of US military operations.

(c) Develop messages to communicate US resolve, capabilities, and intent.

(d) Mitigate and counter adversary and potential adversary operations in the IE with accurate and timely public information and imagery.

(e) Influence or impact adversary decision making with release of information to the public.

(f) Research audiences and advise the staff on the most impactful tactics to inform audience perceptions.

(g) Assess communication impacts toward achieving JFC objectives.

(4) Effective PA is agile and responds quickly to real-time shifts in the public conversation. PAOs should work with commanders to streamline the joint force public communication process to ensure that it remains timely and relevant.

(5) Commanders should evaluate PA to determine its effectiveness. Results should also be used to inform future plan development.

(6) Deception Activities

(a) Deception activities consist of actions executed to mislead adversary military, paramilitary, or violent extremist organization decision makers, thereby causing the adversary to take specific actions (or inactions) that contribute to the friendly mission. Deception activities can be employed during all phases of military operations. PA personnel and resources cannot be used for deception activities because such use undermines the legitimacy of the office and destroys future trust in PA messages.

(b) PA should be planned, coordinated, and deconflicted with deception activities consistent with policy, legal limitations, and security. The coordination between PA and deception activities should safeguard the essential elements of deception plans and maintain the integrity, reputation, and credibility of PA as a source of truthful information. Safeguarding deception-related information is critical to the success of operations; as such, details are classified accordingly.

For additional guidance on deception activities, see JP 3-54, Joint Doctrine for Military Deception.

2. Requirements

a. General Overview

(1) PAOs work with joint planners to identify requirements for PA facilities, personnel, equipment, transportation assets, and public communication assets as early in the planning process as possible. PAOs should identify specific measures to augment PA personnel and procure, lease, or assign other necessary resources. Identifying and allocating resources generally requires assistance from the supporting CCMDs, Services, and Military Departments.

(2) PA and visual information personnel and equipment should be capable of being transported on military and commercial aircraft and aboard military ships. Follow-on items are prioritized through logistics channels. The volume and diversity of media assets influence the organization of PA staff elements.

b. **Facilities.** Facilities may be designated for PA and may include the requirement to establish and operate a MOC. The command's PA staff is located with the headquarters element. When an independent MOC is established, it should be at a secure location convenient to the media. A primary reason for establishing a MOC away from the headquarters may be to improve media access and alleviate OPSEC concerns. Care should be taken to mitigate increased operational risk by providing adequate security. Specific space requirements might include staff work areas within the headquarters element, separate staff and media work areas in the MOC, American Forces Network Program broadcast and transmission facilities, equipment storage, and imaging facilities. Billeting and messing requirements should also be considered.

c. **Personnel.** The day-to-day staffing of most PA offices is likely to be inadequate to respond to the inevitable increase in media and public interest surrounding a crisis. During planning, PA planners, coordinating with the operations directorate of a joint staff global force management team and leadership, identify COAs to address this challenge.

d. **Visual Information-producing Forces.** Whenever possible, requirements for visual information-producing forces should be established in plans by unit type code using time-phased force and deployment data. Realistic and well-articulated requirements help ensure the right forces are in place to produce, acquire, and distribute products during joint operations. The conditions under which the forces operate are critical in determining the correct visual information forces. For example, if the tasking supports maritime salvage operations that require underwater photography, subsurface operations should be listed. Likewise, if handheld aerial photography is required, aircrew-qualified visual information forces should be requested. If the visual information forces are expected to operate with ground combat troops in a hostile or uncertain environment and are required to bring

weapons and any personal tactical equipment, the request for forces should include this information to ensure the appropriate visual information forces are employed.

e. **Equipment.** Based on mission requirements, the PAO should identify equipment to support PA. PA planners should identify their communications infrastructure requirements for each contingency and then identify who will provide them. For example, PA support following natural or man-made disasters may require alternative communications equipment, such as satellite telephones or mobile telephones capable of supplying Internet access, to transmit images, news stories, and social media communications for brief, rapid updates. Maintenance and services essential to sustain the resource packages are also considered.

f. **Transportation**

(1) PA personnel and equipment should be as mobile as other operational forces.

(2) Transportation assets may include:

(a) Vehicles (with drivers and communications assets) to support PA administrative and logistics activities.

(b) Vehicles (with drivers and communications assets) to support the movement of media and PA personnel covering operations.

(c) Force protection assets to travel with PA staffs and media in hostile or uncertain areas.

(d) Aircraft to support the movement of media and military journalists.

(e) Surface and air transportation to move information and imagery products.

g. **Communications.** PA communications should be protected to ensure release of information is immediate and responsive despite a contested, compromised, or degraded environment. Communications requirements include:

(1) Bandwidth to transmit PA products, including visual information, live or as near real time as possible, both intertheater and intratheater, to multiple users simultaneously.

(2) Internet access, to include unfiltered external access for information and imagery release and to monitor local social media sites, and local area network access to establish and operate unit and contingency unclassified and classified websites.

h. **Other Support.** The PA staff may require specialized contracting support and a government purchase card to obtain goods and services not available within the joint force to establish and execute PA throughout the operational area. This may include:

- (1) Contracts for publication of communication products (e.g., newsletters, newspapers, photographs).
- (2) Contracts for products, services, and equipment to support media analysis and assessment.
- (3) Maintenance and service contracts to ensure sustainability of equipment.
- (4) Contracted translation services.

3. Planning

a. **Overview.** PA planners participate throughout the JPP. The JPP is a proven analytical process that provides a methodical approach to planning at any organizational level and at any point before or during joint operations. Examples of specific PA conducted or steps taken during the planning process are depicted in Figure III-1.

(1) **Mission Analysis.** PA planners determine higher headquarters' perspective of how the military will leverage information to achieve national strategic and military objectives. PA planners focus on developing situational understanding of the OE, to include media infrastructure, capability, and bias, as well as the social and cultural characteristics of key areas. PA planners analyze the mission, identify objectives, and review applicable strategic guidance to identify the PA tasks (specified, implied, and essential) and develop initial PA staff estimates.

(2) **COA Development.** PA personnel participate in the development, analysis and wargaming, comparison, and approval of COAs to identify the PA forces required and shortfalls. PAOs should be integral members of the team that develops the operational narrative.

(3) **Plan or Order Development.** PA planners apply PA planning considerations to refine requirements and develop annex F (Public Affairs) of the OPLAN and the PPAG and support the development of other annexes and operational documents, as appropriate. These include task order, prepare to deploy order, EXORD, or aircrew special instructions. Inclusion of PA language in these documents enables PA integration throughout all phases of an exercise or operation.

(a) **Narrative.** Successful military operations depend on creating an operational advantage in a complex and dynamic IE. Information advantage is the operational advantage gained through the joint force's use of information for decision making and its ability to leverage information to create effects on the IE. To meet this challenge, the joint force communicates the rationale for its actions and facts about what has transpired to a wide range of friendly, neutral, and adversarial audiences. The need to communicate a rationale and provide facts about operations and activities is true for military operations conducted in less-developed areas that depend on word of mouth to

Joint Planning Process and Public Affairs Actions

JPP Step	Public Affairs Actions
1. Initiation 2. Mission Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin analysis of the operational environment. • Participate in JIPOE. • Review the following for PA implications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ National strategic guidance ◦ Higher headquarters planning directive ◦ Initial JFC intent • Provide PA perspective during mission analysis. • Identify intelligence requirements for PA support to planning. • Identify specified, implied, and essential PA tasks. • Develop PA input to the mission statement. • Conduct initial PA force structure analysis, including the need for visual information support, and the DoD National Media Pool. • Develop PA facts and assumptions. • Develop PA estimates. • Participate in all cross functional staff organizations related to planning.
3. Course of Action Development 4. COA Analysis and Wargaming 5. COA Comparison 6. COA Approval	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in COA development; identify needed PA capabilities and forces required as well as shortfalls. • Participate in COA analysis and wargaming; identify advantages and disadvantages of each COA from a PA perspective. • Revise the PA staff estimate as needed based on wargaming. • Provide PA input on COA recommendation. • Continued participation in all cross functional staff organizations.
7. Plan or Order Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refine PA requirements (capabilities, force structure, equipment/logistics, and other resources) to support the COA. • Provide PA personnel requirements of the request for forces. • Participate in the time-phased force and deployment data build/validation as applicable. • Continued participation in all cross functional staff organizations related to planning. • Provide input to the operational planning process for all applicable annexes including B, C, D, G, O, V, and draft annex F. • Coordinate any administrative or contracting requirements. • Develop and submit proposed PAG to higher headquarters for review/approval. • Support operational narrative. • Coordinate with subordinate PA staffs to ensure plan synchronization and a smooth transition to deployed operations.

Legend

COA	course of action	PA	public affairs
DoD	Department of Defense	PAG	public affairs guidance
JFC	joint force commander		
JIPOE	joint intelligence preparation of the operational environment		
JPP	joint planning process		

Figure III-1. Joint Planning Process and Public Affairs Actions

remain informed as well as operations conducted in a technologically advanced environment inundated with information. If planners provide a narrative without context, regardless of what the JFC does, others can use their own narratives to explain the military events around them. This will be even worse should planners fail to provide a narrative that gives observers a context for understanding. Developing an effective narrative helps audiences from the individual military member to international audiences understand the reasons behind joint force activities. Narratives are developed through a collaborative

effort that reflects what the mission itself is likely to communicate or signal to those audiences observing it. Primary collaborators for narrative development are the PA team, psychological operations forces, plans directorate of a joint staff, KLE personnel, the political advisor and staff, and intelligence planners.

(b) **Information Staff Estimate.** The PA team describes organic and partner PA capabilities relevant to inform tasks based on commander's objectives, including the location and capabilities of key PA units and teams; describes PA communication and synchronization planning, execution, and assessment activities for the operation in alignment with the USG narrative; identifies facts, assumptions, constraints, and restraints to conduct public communications; describes the strategic and operational media environment and the critical factors that could impact the command's mission, including those beyond geographic considerations; assesses potential media presence, capabilities, and content, as well as national and international attitudes about the situation, command, and leaders; and analyzes key audiences and their news and information expectations and how the command can best inform them. PA teams also provide an assessment of the mass media sentiment and the potential effects of joint operations on that sentiment; consider the requirement to effectively communicate with the populace for whom the commander may become responsible; state known capabilities and shortfalls (to include access to relevant actors and audiences) and include COAs and approximate time necessary to mitigate capability gaps; and describe status of authorities relevant to PA.

For more information on planning, see JP 3-04, Information in Joint Operations.

(c) **Annex F (Public Affairs).** Annex F of an OPLAN should address all PA-related transportation, communications, billeting, equipment, and personnel resources required to support the plan. However, the details of those PA requirements needed to support an operation should be coordinated and included in other appropriate annexes (Logistics, Personnel, and Communications) to obtain these resources and conduct PA as outlined in annex F. Additional planning considerations that should be captured in the annex are included in Figure III-2. The PA annex to the plan or order complements and supports, but does not replace, the PPAG forwarded to OSD. The format for annex F can be found in CJCSM 3130.03, *Planning and Execution Formats and Guidance*. Planning considerations for annex F are in Appendix B, "Annex F (Public Affairs) Development."

(d) **Appendix 10 (Combat Camera) to Annex C (Operations).** Appendix 10 provides COMCAM guidance in plans. Coordinating and cross-referencing related annexes (e.g., PA, information operations, communications, interagency) can increase effectiveness.

For more information on COMCAM, see CJSCI 3205.01, Joint Combat Camera (COMCAM).

Public Affairs Planning Considerations

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media access • Visual information • Media operations centers • Embedding/media pools • Intelligence support • Technology support to public affairs • Command information • American Forces Radio and Television Service • Communication guidance • Internet based products/releases • Security | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host nation • Multinational partners • Country team • Government agencies and nongovernmental organizations • Interagency coordination • Dissemination of interagency guidance • Analysis and feedback • Counter adversary propaganda • Public affairs guidance • Social media implications |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Figure III-2. Public Affairs Planning Considerations

(e) Annex Y (Commanders' Communication Strategy)

1. CCS content is described in CJCSM 3130.03, *Planning and Execution Formats and Guidance*. Content includes the situation and CONOPS focusing on important CCS-related elements, such as the overview of the IE, opposition, lines of operation, measures of effectiveness, tasks, and coordination instructions. PA contributes to the development of annex Y (Commander's Communication Strategy) using the information included in annex F (Public Affairs) to inform the development.

2. A JFC can use the CCS process to coordinate and synchronize communication (i.e., themes, messages, images) and actions (i.e., planning, deployments, operations) to protect the integrity and consistency of joint force communications and align them with broader narratives. Whether the commander uses the CCS process or another, PAOs should ensure public information considerations are incorporated into annex Y (Commander's Communication Strategy), which includes discussion of the CCS themes and subsequent messages to achieve CCS objective(s) throughout the area of responsibility. This requires close collaboration and alignment with other information forces.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS GUIDANCE

Proposed public affairs guidance is created by combatant command and component public affairs (PA) teams and reviewed and approved by the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD). As part of the approval process, OSD may coordinate with other OSD components, federal agencies, and the National Security Council, as appropriate to the issue. With this higher-level approval, it becomes public affairs guidance (PAG). PAG may also be issued directly from OSD. PAG supports the public discussion of defense issues and operations and serves as a source document when responding to media representatives and the public. PAG also outlines planning guidance for related PA responsibilities, functions, activities, and resources. The development and timely dissemination of PAG ensures that all information is in line with policy and identified communication objectives when responding to the information demands of joint operations. PAG also conforms to operations security and the privacy requirements of the members of the joint forces.

Various Sources

(f) **PPAG.** The JFC submits PPAG through the CCDR to the OSD for approval and publication as PAG in accordance with the guidelines outlined in DoDI 5405.3, *Development, Submission, and Approval of Proposed Public Affairs Guidance (PPAG)*. This issuance defines PPAG requirements, which include recommended PA posture, background, contingency statements, message points, answers to anticipated media questions, community engagement guidance, and details governing the release of information and imagery to the public. It should be developed in time to complete coordination and publish initial approved PAG in conjunction with an EXORD. OSD reviews the PPAG and issues a PAG message approving, approving with modifications, or disapproving the PPAG. PAG should be published prior to deployment activities. Development of additional or supplemental PPAG continues throughout the operation or campaign; fragmentary PPAG can also be submitted for quickly developing situations that require OSD guidance or approval. The PAO recommends additional PA posture, drafts statements, identifies issues, and prepares responses to address likely questions, concerns, and interests of audiences.

(g) **Crisis Action Planning.** In crisis action planning, the JPP steps are time sensitive and often require accelerated decision making to respond to an actual or imminent crisis. JFCs develop and approve a COA, publish the plan or order, prepare forces, and arrange sustainment and communications systems support. Public and media inquiries may quickly overwhelm organic PA assets and degrade PA planning capability. Immediate augmentation of the PA staff may be necessary to continue planning and simultaneously respond to public and media interest in DoD response.

For additional information on joint operation planning, refer to JP 5-0, Joint Planning; CJCSM 3122 series, The Joint Operation Planning and Execution System; and CJCSM 3130.03, Planning and Execution Formats and Guidance.

b. PA Planning Considerations

(1) **Overview.** PA should be synchronized across the joint force, and with other agencies, early in the planning process. Authorities to plan, integrate, approve, and disseminate information and imagery should be clearly established. Legal considerations regarding release of information on investigations in the operational area, including those regarding alleged law of war violations, should be addressed as early as possible in the PAG. Coordination of themes, as well as support to media coverage and PAG, should be approved prior to deployment.

(a) Joint force activities to inform the public generally increase immediately prior to and during deployment. To respond to increased public and media interest, the joint force PA staff is generally augmented to expand PA programs and activities. PA demands are highest at the outset of operations or outbreak of hostilities. OSD may direct that media be allowed to embed with joint forces. MOCs and subordinate MOCs can be established to facilitate PA activities when operations attract a high concentration of media. Where direct access to operations is not possible, media pools may need to be established and supported. The synchronization and integration of PA across the JFC staff, and with DoD and other USG activities (e.g., daily press briefings, response to query, COMCAM documentation) is an effective practice to ensure aligned, accurate messaging and to counter misinformation.

(b) Many PA initiatives continue throughout an operation. During stabilization activities, PA should support the transition to civil authority and the repair of the essential information infrastructure. Joint force PA may selectively augment HN radio, television, and print media to help transition to civil control or meet desired conditions and support redeployment activities and coverage.

(2) **Timely Coverage.** It is critical to develop plans to get accurate information out in a timely manner to compete in the IE. PA plans facilitate the media getting a firsthand look at joint operations. To this end, planners and JFCs should:

(a) Commit trained and equipped joint PA teams.

(b) Determine lift and logistic support to move PA and media personnel and media products to and from forward locations, as appropriate.

(c) Institute processes for the rapid clearance and dissemination of both statements and responses, as well as weapons system videos, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance data, and COMCAM products, as appropriate.

(d) Delegate the authority for the release of information and imagery to include COMCAM and other related products to the lowest possible level.

(e) Consider holding frequent briefings in theater with international and US media—several per day, if needed—to keep them apprised of operations, as appropriate.

(3) Higher Headquarters and Synchronization of Public Communications

(a) JFCs develop goals, objectives, estimates, strategies, and plans to accomplish their assigned missions based on strategic guidance and direction. Similarly, PA planners conduct analysis of strategic direction, planning guidance, and goals to develop supporting public communication plans. Commander's intent should be incorporated throughout synchronization of the public communications plan. PA planners should align PA with the other information activities through working groups. PA planners should ensure that PA are aligned and synchronized across the staff prior to execution.

(b) PA planners establish and maintain a routine, ongoing relationship with other planners within the CCMD and joint force. Synchronization across the staff facilitates the availability of services and support required to execute PA. PA planning should include coordination with the HN, the country team, other USG departments and agencies, international organizations, and NGOs, as appropriate.

(c) Synchronized public communication planning also considers interagency and other related organizations' plans to ensure integrated communication is executed. In the United States, synchronization with interagency partners on items of mutual interest is critical to ensuring accuracy and consistency of communication to US audiences that is aligned with US leadership policy directives. In overseas settings, interagency efforts promote international support from nations in the region and provide an opportunity to advance regional and global partnerships. There also is a mutually supporting relationship between the military's PA and defense support to diplomatic efforts and similar PA and diplomatic activities conducted by US embassies and other USG departments and agencies.

(4) Intelligence. During the joint intelligence preparation of the OE process, intelligence analysts conduct a sociocultural analysis of the OE. Sociocultural analysis helps identify critical community organizations and individuals that influence the population or media. To satisfy information requirements, PA personnel should submit requests for information to the J-2 to acquire information and imagery to support the PA mission. PA personnel should review relevant intelligence products to assist in the development of communication plans. PA may also coordinate requests for declassification based on commanders' direction within the intelligence support to information construct.

See JP 2-0, Joint Intelligence, and the Joint Guide for Joint Intelligence Preparation of the Operational Environment, for additional guidance.

(5) Visual Information and COMCAM. PA planners should identify PA information requirements for consideration when planning visual information and COMCAM operations. Commercial multimedia products are copyrighted and cannot be used without consent from the copyright holder.

(6) PA Communication Products. Commanders should plan for PA personnel to report on military operations and produce public communication products for direct release via DoD's media properties.

(7) **KLE/Community Engagement.** KLE is not a primary PA personnel responsibility, but they can serve in an advisory role. KLE and community engagement involves key local and regional leaders throughout the OE, not optimizing the schedules of joint operations leaders. Building relationships to the point of effective engagement and influence takes time. Peace enforcement, counterinsurgency, foreign internal defense, counterterrorism, unconventional warfare, stabilization activities, and many other joint activities and operations require multinational forces to influence and impact the attitudes of key local or regional leaders. In the United States, the continued support of local communities may aid mission success. Developing messages (for both public and private engagement) and finding an effective means of delivery are challenges, especially in environments where interpersonal relationships are paramount. An in-depth understanding of cultural/social background, perspectives, capabilities, strengths, weaknesses, authorities, spheres of influence, and motivators is necessary for the development of enduring personal relationships. KLE/community engagement works best by building relationships over time with enough strength and depth so that they can then support US military objectives.

(a) **KLE Cells.** A KLE cell, if established, uses face-to-face contact and tailors the topics/messages to local conditions overseas. Representatives in this process include personnel from PA, plans directorate of a joint staff, information cell, and civil affairs. Overseas, KLEs are designed to support PA, MISO, and diplomatic objectives. This cell develops a detailed background briefing on each key leader, and then suggests specific approaches to convey the command's overall theme for encouraging support for the mission. As a tool for implementing a public communication program, the employment of KLE cells ensures that whenever commanders meet with leaders, they are delivering an effective, consistent message that supports the command's goals.

(b) **KLE/Community Engagement Assignment and Periodicity.** Tasking KLE/community engagement responsibility to specific individuals deconflicts assignments, ensures desired coverage, and aids in creating a coherent effort. Regular meetings strengthen relationships, increase the level of mutual understanding, and increase the level of support.

For more information on the KLE cell, see JP 3-04, Information in Joint Operations.

(c) **KLE and Community Engagement Assessment.** A debriefing immediately after the KLE and community engagement is critical to assessment and to

PUBLIC AFFAIRS REQUESTING INTELLIGENCE SUPPORT

In the lead-up to Russia's February 2022 invasion of Ukraine, the Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Public Affairs worked with the Joint Staff J-2 [Intelligence] team to declassify intelligence showing Russia's intention to use military deception to obfuscate its intention to invade.

Various Sources

supporting well-planned, focused future events. The assessment process measures progress toward achieving the objectives. Just as KLE products are developed and joint force leaders briefed prior to the meeting, the post-KLE and community engagement debriefing should be part of the process and scheduled immediately after the meeting, while memories and impressions are fresh. To maintain accurate information, participants/note-takers should debrief the PAO on information from the engagement, such as what issues were discussed, key leader positions on the issues, messages/themes delivered, requests made, agreements reached, other considerations surfacing, and impressions.

(8) **Media Access.** The news media is a primary means of communicating with the public and military personnel. DoD guidance typically directs news media access to tactical maneuver units to gain a fuller understanding of an operation.

(a) There is a need for continuous dialogue between the joint force and the media that cover its activities. Open and independent reporting are the principal means of coverage of military operations. Commanders should seek regular opportunities to work with the media. Media coverage of potential future military operations can, to a large extent, shape public perception of the joint force and national security environment. Thus, JFCs and their PAOs continually assess their understanding of the direct and indirect effects of potential actions and signals on perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs, and should formulate and deliver timely and culturally attuned messages. This is true for the US public; the public in allied or partner nations, whose opinions have an indirect effect on unity of effort; and the public in countries where the United States conducts operations, as well as in adjoining and other regional countries, whose perceptions of the United States can affect the duration and cost of US involvement.

(b) Commanders ensure the JPP includes PA assessments that precisely identify resource requirements and provides specific measures to reinforce personnel and to procure, lease, or assign other necessary resources. PA plans should include detailed processes, procedures, and supporting requirements to give media the opportunity to meet the personnel actively conducting operations. Commanders may embed media with selected units for certain operations or periods of time whenever feasible. This practice enables media to provide much more in-depth reporting by staying with a particular unit or following an operation to its termination. When embedding media, it is essential that specific ground rules be established and that they are thoroughly understood by both the media and the embedded unit. Planning should include detailed provisions for accommodating and supporting the media when deployed with the joint force and escorted by those not formally trained in PA. While OPSEC can determine what areas the media are allowed to visit, the personal safety of media crews is not in itself a reason for exclusion from operations coverage.

(c) Commanders may have media accompany them when they conduct visits to operating units in the field. This concept is desirable to media who cannot embed for long periods of time. Media have the opportunity to meet the personnel conducting the operations and have the perspective from senior leaders.

(d) PA should have the capability to support local and regional media consistent with the JFC's instructions and other guidance. Effective public communication requires both cultural and language capabilities. Media facilitation, media response, and media escort operations should be able to accommodate non-English-speaking reporters, especially those of the HN or regional media outlets. News releases and public information Internet sites should have a local/regional language capability. Media analysis should consider cultural context to provide nuanced evaluation of PA efforts. Furthermore, families may receive news from non-English sources and offer interviews with joint force members in languages other than English, as appropriate.

For more information on media relations, see DoDI 5400.14, Procedures for Joint Public Affairs Operations.

(e) Media Escorts

1. PA personnel should act as liaisons but should not interfere with the reporting process. The PA mission includes helping media representatives understand joint force events and occurrences so that media coverage is accurate.

2. Often the media are not accompanied by PA personnel. US commanders, with the assistance of PA personnel, should identify shortages of escorts and provide training or guidance for non-PA personnel who serve as escorts. Commanders develop unit plans tailored to local conditions to accommodate reporters operating under this provision and issue guidance about what information and support they should receive. Appendix A, "Guidelines for Release of Information," contains general guidance on support and information to be provided to media representatives.

(f) Media Credentials and Ground Rules

1. The PAO coordinates with the appropriate OSD entity for accrediting media members in accordance with DoD policy. Credentialing media representatives ensures that, if captured, they are recognized as journalists and treated accordingly under the law of war. Some media embed with the units for an extended time. Embedded reporters are registered by the joint force and carry identifying credentials or, as appropriate, Geneva Convention cards.

2. Journalists in a combat zone are credentialed by the US military and are required to abide by a clear set of military security ground rules that protect US Service members and their operations. Violation of the ground rules may result in suspension of credentials and expulsion from the combat zone of the journalist involved. News organizations make their best efforts to assign experienced journalists to combat operations and to make them familiar with US military operations.

3. Even though journalists not credentialed by DoD may not necessarily be given the same access as those who have credentials, all journalists should still be considered for media pools and should be strongly encouraged to register with the MOC.

During registration, the MOC director should request that non-credentialed journalists abide by the same established media ground rules. Absent unusual circumstances, participating in DoD-hosted training for the media is not used as a prerequisite for accompanying US forces. The decision to suspend credentials or expel a reporter should only be made with the concurrence of the JFC.

4. Ground rules are developed to protect members of DoD from the release of information that could threaten their security or safety during ongoing operations while facilitating the media's access to timely, relevant information. Ground rules reconcile the desire of the media to cover military operations with DoD security and safety concerns and are in no way intended to prevent release of derogatory, embarrassing, negative, or noncomplimentary information. Media ground rules include requirements designed to protect the security, health, and welfare of the media. Media ground rules should also include the process for release of information; media access to the commander; access to the Internet, if not commercially available; and for unintentional exposure to classified information.

5. In multinational operations, responsibilities for establishing media ground rules, credentialing media, and, if necessary, expulsion of media, are developed and implemented through appropriate multinational command and staff channels. Media outlets, owned in whole or in part by governments or citizens of non-partner nations, might not receive the same considerations as those working for outlets owned by governments or citizens of friendly nations. However, as in joint operations, non-credentialed journalists may not be given the same access to a combat zone as those who have credentials. They should be encouraged to register at the appropriate MOC.

6. HNs may have different journalist credentialing standards, access rules, and special requirements for security escorts, which may impose severe limitations on media activity. One area of risk may involve the HN denying access to an HN activity in which US forces are participating but granting access to activities by US-vetted media. The risk can significantly increase if the media representative leverages US access but is not a US citizen and works for a non-US publication. The PA professional ensures that the access granted by the United States is not supporting what may be perceived as foreign information-gathering activities. The joint force PA professional ensures that the HN and US commander are aware that the media representative has been granted access to US personnel and equipment, and the HN's restrictions are respected. The PA professional needs to retain close positive control of the media representative at all times. This situation should be written into media guidelines and signed by both the media representative and the PA professional.

(g) Media Pools

1. Media pools are not the standard means of covering US military operations. Sometimes media pools provide the only means of early access to a military operation. In this case, media pools should be as large as possible and disbanded at the earliest opportunity (within 24 to 36 hours, when possible). The arrival of early-access

media pools does not cancel the principle of independent coverage for journalists already in the area.

2. Even under conditions of open coverage, pools may be appropriate for specific events, such as those at extremely remote locations or where space is limited. In such circumstances, PA planning should specify the number and types of media (including internal media) who form the pool. The military determines the size and composition of the pool, usually establishing categories such as print, broadcast, and trade media to ensure adequate scope and distribution of coverage. The media representatives should determine who fills the spaces in the pool.

3. Under conditions of open coverage, field commanders should be instructed to permit journalists to ride on military vehicles and aircraft, when possible, in accordance with DoD policy. The military is responsible for the transportation of media pools. Commanders should also follow the guidelines in DoDI 5122.08, *Use of DoD Transportation Assets for Public Affairs Purposes*; DoDI 4515.13, *Air Transportation Eligibility*; and *The Joint Travel Regulations* to ensure standardization of policy and procedures.

4. Consistent with its capabilities, the military supplies PAOs with facilities to enable timely, secure, compatible transmission of pool material and makes those facilities available, when possible, for filing independent coverage. If USG facilities are unavailable, journalists file by any other means available. The military does not ban communications systems operated by news organizations, but electromagnetic operational security in battlefield situations may require limited restrictions on the use of such systems.

c. **PA Planning for Specific Operations.** Commanders should ensure PA are tailored to support the joint forces during military operations across the competition continuum. While the public and the media are interested in the essential facts of any situation, that information is incomplete without an understanding of the background, underlying rationale, and other fundamental elements particular to a certain type of operation. Experience shows that media interest in DSCA, foreign humanitarian assistance, managing the consequences of incidents, peace operations, personnel recovery, and similar operations often peaks early, then diminishes gradually. PA planning should take this into account. Commanders and their PA personnel should be prepared to discuss, among other topics, organizational structure, strategy, objectives, tactics, training, logistics, intelligence, and troop support issues. Explaining the details of such areas reinforces the media and public awareness of how the military functions within the context of the stated policies.

4. Execution

a. **Organization.** The size and organization of a joint force PA staff varies to accommodate mission requirements.

b. **PA Management Activities.** Regardless of how the PA staff is organized or manned, it is responsible to:

- (1) Provide PA advice and support to the commander.
- (2) Develop and disseminate communication products.
- (3) Participate in operations analysis, planning, execution, and assessment, including support to OIE.
- (4) Disseminate timely, accurate information about military activities.
- (5) Respond to media and public inquiries.
- (6) Participate in all applicable cross-functional staff organizations (e.g., boards, centers, cells, offices, elements, groups, teams, working groups) as prioritized by the PAO.
- (7) Scan and analyze the IE continuously, collaborating with other staff.
- (8) Research, develop, and coordinate communication guidance and plans based on open source, operational, and intelligence reporting.
- (9) Prepare PA annexes and support other annex development, as required.
- (10) Execute and assess communication actions.
- (11) Make recommendations on future PA priorities, near and long term.
- (12) Coordinate PA with other USG departments and agencies, HN, and NGOs, as appropriate.
- (13) Identify intelligence requirements to support PA planning and assessment.
- (14) Identify visual information and imagery requirements.
- (15) Establish and manage a MOC, as appropriate.
- (16) Monitor and assess public opinion, media coverage, and key audience sentiment.
- (17) Modify communication guidance and plans based on assessments.
- (18) Provide media training to members of the joint force appropriate for each individual's level of interaction with the news media.
- (19) Inform JFCs and staffs on the role of information and PA in operations.
- (20) Develop programs that support community engagement in support of mission objectives in the operational area.

5. Assessment

a. Assessment is a process that measures progress of the joint force toward mission accomplishment. It occurs at all levels during all military operations. Continuous assessment helps the JFC and joint force adjust operations to ensure objectives are achieved. The primary emphasis of the PA assessment is to identify, measure, and evaluate implications within the OE that the commander does not control, but can influence through coherent and comprehensive public communication established by early integration in the planning process.

b. Assessment begins during mission analysis when the commander and staff consider what to measure and how to measure it to determine progress toward accomplishing tasks, creating conditions, or achieving results. Baselines for what is going to be measured are established at this point.

(1) Long-term PA objectives support OPLAN or campaign objectives. PA planners identify how PA, within its construct and mechanisms, can contribute toward achieving objectives. Assessment of objective progress should include measures of effectiveness and measures of performance. Impact indicators should be established for each measure of effectiveness and measure of performance. This is accomplished by being part of the JPP from the beginning and working with the assessment planners.

(2) This initial set of criteria becomes the basis for future assessment.

c. Media analysis or assessment of tactical PA products and activities using various open sources, in combination with classified information collection sources, can provide updates to the IE assessment. Various assessment methods, including content analysis, coding, and other such methods can be used to provide updates to the commander and planners. During execution, assessments should contribute to adjustments to both current operations and future planning.

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CHAPTER IV

JOINT PUBLIC AFFAIRS DURING OPERATIONS IN THE HOMELAND

“The failure to execute a comprehensive ‘whole of Government’ crisis communications plan for an incident of this magnitude negatively impacted the ability to manage information, direct messaging, and conduct effective crisis communications throughout the response organization.”

The Federal Response to Deepwater Horizon: Lessons Learned, December 2011

1. Overview

a. Planning and executing PA during operations conducted in the homeland is somewhat different than PA conducted during joint operations. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is the lead agency responsible for the National Response Framework (NRF) and its ESFs per statutory authorities.

b. Per Presidential Policy Directive-8, *National Preparedness*, DoD PA operates in accordance with guidance on incident communications emergency policy and procedures found in the NRF. The NRF provides guidance to all federal incident communicators during a federal response to an event. It establishes mechanisms to prepare and deliver coordinated and sustained messages and provides for prompt federal acknowledgement of an incident and communication of emergency information to the public. The incident communications emergency policy and procedures comprise two annexes contained in the NRF:

(1) **PA Support Annex.** Describes the interagency policies and procedures for incident communications with the public.

(2) **ESF #15 – External Affairs Annex (and the Standard Operating Procedures).** Outlines the functions, resources, and capabilities for external affairs, including PA.

c. Under the NRF, DHS is the coordinating agency for federal public communications and responsible for ESF #15 activation. DoD typically acts as a supporting agency for ESF #15.

d. Federal assistance, including assistance from DoD, can be provided to state, territorial, District of Columbia, tribal, and local jurisdictions, and to other USG departments and agencies, in several different ways through various mechanisms and authorities. Often, federal assistance does not require coordination by DHS and can be provided without a Presidential major disaster or emergency declaration. The National Incident Management System provides the template for incident management regardless of size, scope, or cause of the incident. It includes a core set of concepts, principles, terminology, and technologies covering the incident command system; multiagency coordination systems; unified command; training; identification and management of

resources (including systems for classifying types of resources); qualifications and certification; and the collection, tracking, and reporting of incident information and incident resources.

e. DoD also assists local authorities under immediate response authorities or mutual aid agreements. This type of response can quickly move from a localized incident to a larger national response.

For further information on operations in the homeland, see JP 3-28, Defense Support of Civil Authorities, and JP 3-27, Joint Homeland Defense.

2. Requirements

a. **Personnel.** PA and visual information personnel requirements for operations in the homeland vary based on the situation. There are existing joint OPLANs, contingency plans, and joint manning documents that specify the personnel requirements for certain potential operations. Additionally, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff issues a standing DSCA EXORD annually that directs force providers to consider potential requirements. It enables the CCDR to place needed personnel in a prepare-to-deploy order status. Adequate PA personnel should be staffed early enough to be effective.

b. **Facilities.** During operations in the homeland, PA may be conducted in fixed buildings (e.g., hotels, armories, office buildings). In many situations, commercial telephone and Internet connections (i.e., wired, wireless, and cellular) are available. In the case of state funerals or other planned operations, the facilities may be predesignated and wired to support PA. Personnel supporting PA generally use commercial lodging and local restaurants.

c. **Equipment.** When required, PA and visual information personnel, who deploy in support of operations in the homeland, should have a cellular phone and a laptop computer with wireless Internet access. PA personnel with access to portable broadcast-quality visual information transmission systems should be prepared to deploy with and support operations with those systems. PA and visual information personnel should deploy with digital cameras and have still and motion imagery editing and data transfer software on their laptops. Personnel do not always have access to the “.mil” network domain during operations in the homeland and may have to rely on commercial or public systems for communication. Personnel should deploy with Government Emergency Telecommunications Service cards, if possible. PA personnel should plan for situations where government networks and systems are not available.

d. **Training.** All PA and visual information personnel ordered to deploy in support of operations in the homeland should have working knowledge of the NRF as it pertains to PA. Online Federal Emergency Management Agency training courses are available.

For more information, see <https://training.fema.gov>.

3. Planning

a. PA planning for operations in the homeland is similar as for other joint operations but is tailored to support the ESF #15 requirement to provide accurate, coordinated, timely, and accessible information. PA and visual information activities should be planned, coordinated, and integrated across government and private organizations.

b. PA planners ensure that plans and associated annexes delineate responsibilities, processes, and logistics as appropriate in support of ESF #15, as follows:

(1) Coordinate messages with federal, state, territorial, tribal, and local governments.

(2) Support the joint information center (JIC).

(3) Gather information on the incident.

(4) Provide incident-related information and visual information through the media and other sources in accessible formats and multiple languages (as necessary) to individuals, households, businesses, and industries directly or indirectly affected by the incident.

(5) Monitor news coverage to ensure that accurate information is disseminated.

(6) Handle appropriate special projects such as news conferences and press operations for incident area tours by government officials and other dignitaries.

(7) Provide basic services, such as communications and supplies, to assist the news media in disseminating information to the public.

4. Execution

a. Domestic situations that require a military response are generally short notice or no notice events. Specific DoD PA responsibilities are outlined in various CCMD plans and standing PAG. The EXORD or fragmentary order for the incident provides the PA posture and media engagement policy. Incident-specific guidance is developed by the primary agency in coordination with participating agencies.

b. Operations conducted in the homeland may be either homeland defense or DSCA operations and are planned and executed accordingly. DoD PA support evolves based on the planning for the specific operation.

c. For DSCA operations, the Secretary of Defense designates a supported CCDR. The supported CCDR serves as DoD synchronizer during execution of DSCA operations. The CCMD PA is responsible for synchronizing PA efforts for DoD units supporting the DSCA response, to include developing, providing, and updating PA guidance. The defense

coordinating officer and the defense coordinating element review and forward requests for military support, then forward mission assignments to military organizations through DoD-designated channels, and assign military liaisons, as appropriate, to activated ESFs.

(1) PA personnel assess the situation for the defense coordinating officer, defense supporting element, and CCMD PA staff. They also provide initial interface with other deployed federal public information officers and serve as the DoD liaison to the media.

(2) If the DoD response expands, PA personnel deploy with the operational command post or joint force lead element to coordinate DoD PA and involvement in the incident.

(3) Other units tasked to deploy in support of domestic operations should also include a PA element in their headquarters staff. This PA element should be prepared to conduct media engagement to show how the unit is supporting the federal response.

(4) Other USG departments and agencies may submit requests for PA, COMCAM, or visual information support.

d. **JIC.** A substantial portion of the PA effort supports the media to facilitate affected populations' access to information. A JIC may be established to coordinate the release of emergency and incident information (see Figure IV-1). Figure IV-1 represents the organization of a JIC under the ESF #15 construct and is implemented at the higher levels of a response, such as the joint or area field office.

For more information, see the National Response Team Joint Information Center Model: Collaborative Communications During Emergency Response Manual.

(1) The JIC should be located close to the best sources of information about the situation, such as an incident command post or emergency operations center. Note that DoD and other agencies often have a separate staff (to include a MOC) performing PA duties and functions on behalf of their own agency. In the absence of a JIC, DoD PA still coordinates with other agencies and the primary agency.

(2) When a JIC is established, the responsible military commander ensures that adequate PA personnel are assigned when DoD forces deploy. However, the bulk of DoD PA personnel supporting the incident are assigned to the JFC.

(3) A JIC coordinates timely and accurate information from multiple agencies and organizations for release to the public and other stakeholders. Under the Incident Command System, the public information officer is one of the key staff supporting the command structure. The JIC has three primary responsibilities:

(a) Gather incident data.

(b) Analyze public perceptions of the response.

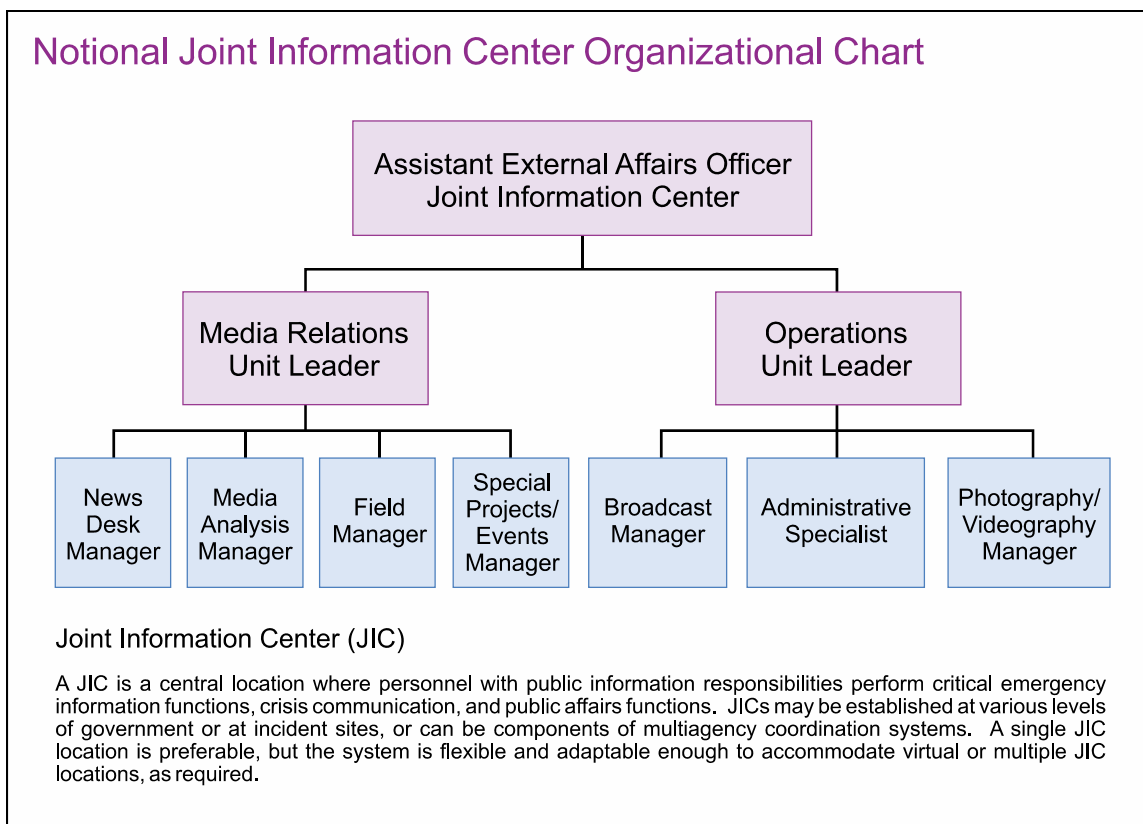


Figure IV-1. Notional Joint Information Center Organizational Chart

(c) Inform the public and serve as the source of accurate and comprehensive information about the incident and the response to a specific set of audiences.

(4) DoD PA releases its own information and visual information and conducts media operations, but the products should be coordinated with either the primary agency or the JIC to ensure consistent messages and avoid the release of sensitive information. While operations in the homeland are different than overseas operations, OPSEC and information security issues should still be considered before information is released.

e. During DSCA operations, CCMD PA personnel monitor the National Incident Communications Conference Line (NICCL) that is used for transmission and exchange of critical and timely incident information among federal and affected state, local, and tribal authorities. It is a key source of emerging information for PA and communications synchronization.

(1) If the incident is critical, DHS PA may continuously monitor the NICCL for updates from other USG departments and agencies. The DHS PA staff maintains a summary of key NICCL communications and interagency coordination actions to inform DoD and other agencies' PA.

(2) DoD and CCMD PAO receive DHS incident PAG and daily summaries via the NICCL when ESF #15 is activated.

(3) During sustained incident management activity, the NICCL is used for daily or other incident communications coordination calls. The CCMD PAO maintains and distributes NICCL information to subordinate PA participants.

(4) Numerous federal interagency partners, states, territories, the District of Columbia, tribal entities, and thousands of local governments may be involved in operations in the homeland. The multiplicity of partners and jurisdictions makes PA coordination complex. The NICCL and state incident communication coordination lines can help PA manage this complexity.

f. **DoD PAG.** The OSD, or the CCMD PAO on behalf of OSD, may develop PAG for operations in the homeland that is consistent with other operations and DHS PAG but also includes information from non-DoD participants. Additionally, while DoD PAG does not apply to other agencies, it should be coordinated with, and distributed to, all participating organizations. The PAO may produce a PA plan when PAG is not appropriate or feasible.

g. **Command Information.** Based on the ubiquitous nature of the media and multiple channels of communication, command information requirements are not significant in operations in the homeland. However, in extended operations in the homeland, they may take on a larger role.

5. Assessment

As with all military operations, assessment of public communication activities during operations in the homeland informs follow-on planning and future operations. How the USG responds to domestic situations is of interest to other countries and covered by foreign media and thus part of the PA assessment.

CHAPTER V

THE FUTURE OF JOINT PUBLIC AFFAIRS

1. Introduction

a. PA must change due to the changing character of war. Over the past three decades, the joint force has faced an increasing requirement for timely and accurate information as technological advancements have altered the way audiences receive and interpret information. To adapt to evolving threats and the changing character of war, PA professionals must overcome their institutional inertia and refocus their approach, organization, and training on planning and executing overt information effects in support of mission objectives. Additionally, leaders must shift their mindset. It is crucial they consider information as a key component of planning and operating in the future, rather than an ad-hoc consideration for the leaders to account for after planning or execution.

b. In the future, a JFC's reliance on information and communications capabilities will grow and require longer-term planning. While making use of new and appropriate technological advancements, PA professionals should focus on both informing US and international audiences and competing in the IE. When properly coordinated, the informational instrument of national power serves as a force multiplier. The laws of physics do not limit the creation of effects in the IE in the same way they limit lethal effects; information exists everywhere in all mediums and people can interpret the same information differently. Information is the most easily employed of all the instruments of national power and can be employed at comparatively low cost and minimal resources.

c. The ability to understand and leverage information will become a crucial factor for JFCs and their staffs in determining how to secure advantage, influence competition, and win or prevent future conflicts. This chapter offers insights into potential future PA requirements and contributions to future campaigns and operations.

2. The Future Operational and Information Environment

a. **Changing Character of the IE.** Due to the nature of the United States' open society, one of the easiest avenues for adversary attack is via the IE. Adversaries will likely exploit the US legal distinction between armed conflict/war and peace. We can expect that our adversaries will aggressively attack the United States and our allies and partners via the IE across the competition continuum to prevent or degrade our ability to project power in armed conflict.

(1) Threats to the joint force will continue to emanate from the IE. These threats may take many forms, including counter-narratives, the potential release of real or fabricated classified information, or other technological impairments that may prevent PA communications dissemination.

(2) Technology, including deepfakes and AI, will continue to advance and make misinformation and disinformation increasingly difficult to detect. This will complicate

the ability of PA professionals to affect the IE and inform audiences with accurate information.

(3) Within the homeland, adversaries are likely to target families and local communities for manipulation, threats, and blackmail. This could distract home station forces from projecting power or create concerns for deployed personnel that degrade their mission focus. To counteract this malign activity, PA professionals should operate proactively to educate audiences and build cognitive resistance.

(4) The Internet allows for near instant global communication and the ability to influence human behavior at unprecedented speeds. While the United States and many of its allies and partners see this as a benefit, adversaries fear the openness of the Internet and its impact on their domestic populations. Resultingly, adversaries may restrict or regulate access to the Internet in attempts to stifle the flow of information to their domestic populace, including the flow of accurate information that PA provides.

b. IE Fragmentation. Increased fragmentation of news sources and growing distrust of information will likely lead to actors to select a limited number of sources (i.e., the creation of “opinion bubbles”). Individuals or small groups can have outsized roles within the IE due to technology, access, and focus on intended audiences.

c. Motivation Beyond Operational Gain. As witnessed in certain approaches used by Russian forces in Ukraine, adversaries may continue or expand the use of lethal effects for public perception rather than operational gain.

d. Effects and Implications of AI. Evolving AI technology should lead to more efficient, responsive, and dynamic communication efforts within the joint force, but will also present increased challenges. PA professionals should remain ahead of competitors and consistently work to maintain public trust. PA professionals in the future should consider the following implications of AI:

(1) **Misinformation and Disinformation.** PA professionals and other information forces should expect to see increased challenges from AI-generated misinformation and disinformation.

(2) **Enhanced Communication and Messaging.** AI is likely to continue to streamline and enhance communication strategies by analyzing large amounts of data to identify trends, sentiment, and potential issues. With AI, PA professionals should be able to craft more effective and timely messages. The same capability is likely to present challenges when leveraged by adversaries.

(3) **Automated Content Generation.** AI-powered tools can assist in generating press releases, social media posts, and other communication materials, enabling consistency and speed in disseminating information.

(4) **Management of Crises.** During crises, PA professionals could use AI to quickly analyze incoming information and public sentiment, allowing PA professionals to respond swiftly and appropriately, and mitigate negative impacts.

(5) **Data-Driven Decision Making.** PA professionals and planners could use AI and other digital transformation efforts to provide insights through predictive analytics, helping to anticipate key audiences' interests, and to plan strategies accordingly.

3. Considerations for Public Affairs in the Future

a. **Overt Preparation of the OE.** The effective conduct of PA supports the US ideals of transparency and the free flow of information. This combination allows PA to apply to most situations for competition, especially where other capabilities may not be appropriate. PA professionals can and should continue to overtly influence the OE throughout competition to increase US, allied, and partner advantage.

b. **Time as a Consideration for PA Effects.** The cognitive effects generated by PA (e.g., convincing audiences to change their understanding of a topic, perceptions, and behavior) may take months or years. Additionally, the ability of JFCs to detect those changes will also take time. Assessing changes in the IE may take weeks or months, even with substantial resources. This is often a departure from the lived experiences of JFCs who may expect prompt feedback (i.e., battlefield damage assessments). Therefore, JFCs may need to shift their mindsets to see PA's contribution to campaigns and operations as activities that could occur across multiple commanders' tenures.

c. **Joint, Coalition, and Global Integration.** PA has both regional and global effects. JFCs should ensure synchronization of PA with other operations or activities to ensure the maximum realization of positive effects, and to minimize negative impacts. This coordination should take place during planning and throughout subsequent operations. PA personnel should continue to increase integration into operations and planning processes. PA professionals should also expand the incorporation of intelligence insights to ensure proper coordination for public release, and to remain competitive with other sources of information. Additionally, PA professionals should provide input throughout joint planning and operations to assist JFCs and their staffs in integrating cognitive aspects of military operations throughout the competition continuum. PA professionals should continue or expand support to future campaigns or operations by:

(1) Considering and recommending mission objectives and assessment measures that consider cognitive outcomes.

(2) Leading or co-leading planning activities for overt information effects.

(3) Informing commander's intent with considerations beyond maneuver, fires, and destruction of enemy forces, that articulate to US forces the *why* of a given mission.

(4) Leading operational narrative development within the JPP.

(5) Developing and executing specific information activities to achieve JFC objectives, including detecting and effectively responding to misinformation and disinformation.

(6) Contributing to operational risk management by providing an understanding of the informational risks of action (or inaction) and measures to mitigate risk.

(7) Contributing to overall campaign or operational assessment. PA planners and professionals may identify OE indicators that demonstrate desired cognitive changes in target audiences' perception or behaviors. These indicators may demonstrate or inform mission measures of effectiveness.

(8) Considering allies and partners. Incorporating allies and partners' activities provides opportunities to leverage different authorities, relationships, cultural understanding, languages, and perspectives. Future PA planners should consider collaborating with allies and partners to enhance overt information activity effectiveness, including advancing combined force objectives, or impacting adversary objectives.

(9) Building ally and partner resilience. Aggressive actors and adversaries may challenge the resilience of partner nations and US efforts to support allies and partners. In the future, the joint force and information planners should consider programs, plans, and messaging to support resilience in allies and partners across a whole-of-society approach. PA professionals' efforts to develop partner resilience should include a whole-of-society perspective where the government, military, police, and people of that nation collaborate to confront their adversary or threat.

4. Adapting the Public Affairs Profession for the Future

a. To compete in the future, PA professionals will continue to optimize traditional dissemination venues, but the PA profession should also adapt to emerging communications tools and challenges by:

(1) Developing well-rounded PAOs who are capable of the integration needed in joint planning and who possess knowledge of developing communications trends. Future PAOs should be able to advise senior leaders and prioritize what is necessary to support and operational objectives, including knowing when to avoid events, engagements, approaches, and that have low return on investment.

(2) Retaining talent by developing and promoting effective communicators with the necessary planning and assessment skills, and by consistently providing access to necessary technology and tools. Once these personnel are onboard, it is vital to utilize their abilities as long as possible. Experience is of utmost importance in PA, and the Services cannot quickly or easily mitigate a loss of experience.

(3) Improving integration of PA throughout the JFC staff. The success of PA depends on its ability to operate within the overall concept of operations. A standalone or isolated approach to PA is unlikely to yield desired results. Effective or successful PA

depends on commanders, operators, and other information professionals recognizing the value proposition of PA, integrating PA into concept of operations development, and setting appropriately high expectations for PA performance.

(4) Enhancing training and education of PA personnel with training throughout their career beyond initial skills training. This training could include tools and techniques that leverage relevant and emerging technologies and allow future PA professionals to stay ahead of evolving communication strategies. Additionally, increasing crossover with the private sector would allow PA personnel to learn alternate and emerging communications best practices, which may enable PA personnel to find advantage over adversaries.

(5) Enhancing monitoring and analysis using AI and related capabilities to monitor media coverage, social media, and other communication channels to provide real-time analysis and alert PA leaders to emerging issues and shifts in public opinion.

(6) Focusing/tailoring outreach by using AI to help identify specific audience segments and tailor messages to be more relevant and impactful to improve engagement and outreach efforts. PA personnel need consistent access and resources to achieve this end.

b. The PA of the future will need to successfully evolve through maintaining proven PA methodology, while being adaptive and retaining the credibility and trust of a multitude of audiences. The deliberate release of authorized information will remain a critical component of strategic communication, enabling the joint force to shape the narrative, counter misinformation and disinformation, and effectively engage in cooperation, competition, and conflict. The imperative of maintaining public trust while competing in the IE will never change.

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APPENDIX A

GUIDELINES FOR RELEASE OF INFORMATION

1. Release of Information

a. Release Authority and Public Statements

(1) Until release authority is delegated to them, units should forward queries and proposed news releases to the CCMD PAO.

(2) No public statements concerning operations should be made by subordinate units without prior coordination with the CCMD PAO.

(3) Commanders and staff should ensure compliance with all USG and DoD policy on release of information and use of social media platforms.

For additional guidance, see DoDD 5122.05, Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs (ATSD(PA)); DoDI 5230.09, Clearance of DoD Information for Public Release; DoDI 5230.29, Security and Policy Review of DoD Information for Public Release; DoDI 5400.17, Official Use of Social Media for Public Affairs Purposes; DoDI 5405.03, Development, Submission, and Approval of Proposed Public Affairs Guidance (PPA); and the Department of Defense Visual Information Style Guide.

b. Assumptions

(1) All statements are on the record.

(2) News media can transmit instantaneous live reports from the operational area. Failure to plan for and accommodate the media does not stop them from reporting.

(3) News media coverage is highly competitive, with a tendency to seek access to the operational area and report events as they happen.

(4) News media already on the scene may find ways to get to the operational area(s) and report the activities as they happen without regard for security concerns.

(5) Independent media may be simultaneously deployed with the DoD National Media Pool at the invitation of the Service component headquarters, under guidelines established by CCMD PAO that differ from those that apply to the DoD National Media Pool.

c. Security Instructions

(1) PAOs submitting or staffing proposed products for public release ensure that the information contained therein is fully coordinated and properly classified until approved for release.

(2) Media personnel are not usually given access to classified information. In circumstances where access may be appropriate, PAOs need to gain specific approval from the JFC in accordance with established policy for this access.

(3) Some members of the media may be briefed on planned operations prior to execution if they agree to withhold release until permitted to do so by the appropriate military authorities. Security of classified material is the responsibility of all DoD personnel and DoD contractor personnel.

d. Release below the JFC Level

(1) Upon delegation of release authority, component and subordinate commanders may release information and visual information within the bounds of policy and guidance set forth by the joint force PAO or MOC director.

(2) A verbatim record of releases and news conferences should be maintained.

(3) Subordinate commanders should report the substance of any interview or responses to query to the MOC.

(4) News conferences should be videotaped or audiotaped.

e. **DoDD 5400.07, DoD Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Program.** Requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act Program should be coordinated through the command's designated Freedom of Information Act representative.

f. **Title 5, United States Code, Section 552a, The Privacy Act of 1974.** DoD personnel do not disclose any personal information contained in any system of records except as authorized by DoD 5400.11-R, *Department of Defense Privacy Program*, or other applicable law or regulation. Personnel willfully making such a disclosure when knowing that disclosure is prohibited are subject to possible criminal penalties or administrative sanctions.

2. Discussions with the Media

a. **Preparation.** Preparation results in more effective discussions with the media. Central to the process is identifying what information is to be released based on prevailing PAG and OPSEC measures. Commanders, briefers, and PA personnel should be aware of the basic facts of any operation and sensitive to the various consequences of communicating them to the public.

b. **Security.** "Security at the source" serves as the basis for ensuring that no information is released that jeopardizes OPSEC or the safety and privacy of joint military forces. Under this construct, individuals meeting with journalists are responsible for ensuring that no classified or sensitive information is revealed. This guidance also applies

to photographers, who should be directed to not take pictures of classified areas or equipment or in any way compromise sensitive information.

c. **Briefing Information.** Each operational situation requires a deliberate PA assessment to identify specific information to be released. The following categories of information are releasable in most circumstances; however, operational considerations may necessitate modifications:

(1) The arrival of US units in the operational area once officially announced by DoD or by other commands in accordance with release authority granted by OSD. Information could include mode of travel (sea or air), date of departure, and home station or port.

(2) Approximate friendly force strength and equipment figures.

(3) Approximate friendly casualty and prisoner of war figures by Service. Approximate figures of adversary personnel detained during each action or operation.

(4) Nonsensitive, unclassified information and visual information regarding US air, land, sea, space, cyberspace, and special operations, past and present.

(5) In general terms, identification and location of military targets and objectives previously attacked and the types of ordnance expended.

(6) Date, time, or location of previous military missions and actions, as well as mission results.

(7) Number of combat air patrol or reconnaissance missions or sorties flown in the operational area. Generic description of origin of air operations, such as “land” or “carrier-based.”

(8) Weather and climate conditions.

(9) If appropriate, allied participation by type (e.g., ground units, ships, aircraft).

(10) Conventional operations’ unclassified code names.

(11) Names of installations and assigned units.

(12) Size of friendly force participating in an action or operation using general terms such as “multi-battalion,” or “naval task force.”

(13) Types of forces involved (e.g., aircraft, ships, carrier strike groups, tank, infantry units).

(14) The identification of any friendly casualties and the specifics of the casualty-producing situation, until released by the JFC.

d. Classified Information. Classified aspects of equipment, procedures, and operations are protected from disclosure to the media. In more general terms, information in the following categories should not be revealed because of potential jeopardy to future operations, the risk to human life, possible violation of HN or allied sensitivities, or the possible disclosure of intelligence methods and sources. While these guidelines serve to guide military personnel who talk with the media, they may also be used as ground rules for media coverage. The list is not necessarily complete and should be adapted to each operational situation.

(1) For US (or allied) units, specific numerical information on troop strength, aircraft, weapons systems, on-hand equipment, or supplies available for support of combat units. General terms should be used to describe units, equipment, or supplies.

(2) Any information that reveals details of future plans, operations, or strikes, including postponed or canceled operations.

(3) Information that reveals the specific location of military forces or shows the level of security at military installations or encampments. For datelines, stories state that the report originates from general regions unless a specific country has acknowledged its participation.

(4) Rules of engagement.

(5) Information on intelligence activities, including sources and methods, lists of targets, and battle damage assessments.

(6) During an operation, specific information on friendly force troop movement or size, tactical deployments, and dispositions that jeopardizes OPSEC or lives. This includes unit designations and names of operations until released by the JFC.

(7) Identification of mission aircraft points of origin, other than as land- or carrier-based.

(8) Information on the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of weapon systems and tactics (to include adversary camouflage, cover, deception, targeting, direct and indirect fire, intelligence collection, or security measures).

(9) Specific identifying information on missing or downed personnel, aircraft, or sunken ships while search and rescue operations are planned or under way.

(10) Special operations forces' tactics, techniques, procedures, equipment, and classified unit designations (to include names and faces of assigned personnel) which, if disclosed, could cause serious harm to the ability of these forces to accomplish their mission.

(11) Information on operational or support vulnerabilities that could be used against US or allied units until that information no longer provides tactical advantage to the adversary and is, therefore, released by the JFC. Military personnel who talk with the media describe damage and casualties as light, moderate, or heavy.

(12) Specific operating methods and tactics (e.g., offensive and defensive tactics or speed and formations). General terms such as “slow” or “fast” may be used.

(13) Detainees are protected from public curiosity at all times. Strict compliance with this requirement is essential. There is no distinction between international and domestic media regarding this obligation. Media attention concerning detainees is likely to be substantial. Commanders and staffs should anticipate such attention and ensure that supporting PA personnel develop procedures, in advance, for dealing with media requests for visits and information. Unless delegated to subordinate commanders, the OSD is the sole release authority for photographs or video of detainees. Commanders should prepare and coordinate, in advance, PA plans for events such as detainee movements, transfers, or releases, with both the transferring and receiving commanders.

(a) Requests for interviews or filming of detainees are coordinated through the staff judge advocate to ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations, including the law of war.

(b) Photographing, filming, or other videotaping of detainees for other than internal detention facility management and intelligence purposes is prohibited.

(c) Individuals in the custody or under the physical control of the USG, regardless of nationality or physical location, are not subjected to cruel, inhumane, or degrading treatment or punishment.

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APPENDIX B

ANNEX F (PUBLIC AFFAIRS) DEVELOPMENT

The guidance in this appendix provides additional detail and considerations for the development of annex F (Public Affairs) of the OPLAN format found in CJCSM 3130.03, *Planning and Execution Formats and Guidance*.

1. Situation

- a. **General.** Assigns responsibilities and guidance for military PA actions.
- b. **Enemy.** Identify expected actions of adversary forces and forces hostile to US interests.
- c. **Friendly.** Identify friendly agencies not under JFC control that contribute to the PA effort. Include OSD, DOS, chief of mission, and multinational partners' PA programs, as appropriate.
- d. **Assumptions**
 - (1) Describe HN preferences or sensitivities to be considered in developing and executing PA programs.
 - (2) CCDRs should be prepared to host the DoD National Media Pool during all stages of operations.

2. Mission

State clearly and concisely the essential PA tasks to be accomplished as they relate to the overall operation and commander's intent.

3. Execution

- a. **CONOPS.** Outline PA efforts for the operation as part of the JFC's mission and concept of the operation.
- b. **Tasks.** Outline the PA tasks to be completed in various operational phases.
 - (1) Provide any additional information to the supported CCDR and other supporting commands to include release authority and guidance on casualty and mortuary affairs, US and multinational prisoner of war or missing in action, and enemy prisoner of war matters. Consider the establishment of a MOC. Outline PA visual information and COMCAM requirements.
 - (2) Provide detailed personnel and equipment support requirements to component commands. Address the following: access to the on-scene commander,

supported CCDR, the DOS representative, and the secure voice circuit that connects the MOC; access to hard-copy message facilities between the same points; access to intertheater and intratheater transportation for escorted media; access to secure and nonsecure Internet access that connects the MOC to other PA outlets; access to digital imagery receiver equipment (could be through an intranet source); access to equipment for review; and release of battle damage assessment-type video footage (could be through COMCAM). Coordinate this annex with logistics, communications, CCS, and other planners/processes to ensure required support is detailed.

(3) List Service, component command, and other supporting commands' support requirements.

c. Coordinating Instructions. Identify procedures for the following areas:

(1) **Coordination of Release of Information.** Provide detailed procedures for all supporting commands for handling or forwarding to the supported command queries, responses, and proposed news releases for clearance.

(2) **PA Support to CCS.** Coordinate elements of PA with other information forces, as appropriate.

(3) Determine requirement(s) for development and coordination of appropriate PAG in accordance with DoDI 5405.03, *Development, Submission, and Approval of Proposed Public Affairs Guidance (PPAG)*, and with particular attention to appropriate PA postures (see Figure B-1).

(4) Coordinate requests for interviews and news conferences with the individual's unit and Service PA offices for returned US personnel and with the supporting staff judge advocate for enemy prisoners of war or detained personnel.

(5) Outline required PA coordination with other staff elements involved in release of information outside the command.

(6) Provide guidelines for release of imagery—to include imagery taken by Service members on the battlefield.

(7) Provide guidelines for use of social media, to include release authority for communication products.

(8) Establish procedures for keeping PA historical records.

d. Media Ground Rules

(1) **Release of Cleared Information.** Establish means for release of information to be cleared and made available to the press.

Public Affairs Postures

	Public Affairs Posture	Descriptions	Examples
Passive	No Response	A public affairs (PA) posture of “no response” is for those plans and activities that due to classification and other sensitivities we will not offer any information on, even when directly requested.	Ongoing special operations; capabilities that are classified.
	Response to Query	A PA posture of “response to query” is for those plans and activities where we will not proactively release information but will respond to queries on the subject using a holding statement and/or questions and answers (Q&A).	Ongoing exercises with partner nations that do not desire proactive announcement of their involvement.
Active	Restricted Release	A PA posture of “restricted release” is for those plans and activities where it is necessary and/or desirable to do a limited, proactive release or announcement, limited media engagement (as necessary and appropriate to the circumstances), and response to queries using Q&A.	Announcement of a raid to capture or kill a terrorist leader.
	Active Release	A PA posture of “active release” is for those plans and activities where it is necessary and/or desirable to be as proactive and transparent as possible in communicating on a subject to include actively soliciting for media and public attention.	Announcing a personnel policy change; promoting an air show.

Figure B-1. Public Affairs Postures

(2) **Categories of Releasable Information.** Provide precise guidance for release of specific categories of information to the media.

(3) **Categories of Information Not Releasable.** Provide guidance on specific categories of information not releasable to the media.

4. Administration and Logistics

a. Identify administration and logistics requirements for PA support. Identify OPSEC procedures for PA personnel, including security review procedures. Identify procedures for providing PA, audio-visual, and visual information coverage of the operation, including COMCAM requirements. Identify internal information requirements for subordinate and component commands.

b. Identify detailed personnel and equipment support requirements. Address the following:

(1) Secure voice and data connectivity between the MOC and on-scene commander, supported commander, and the DOS representative.

(2) Inter-theater and intra-theater transportation for escorted media.

(3) Secure and nonsecure Internet between the MOC and other PA outlets.

(4) Digital imagery receiver and transmission equipment.

(5) Equipment for review and release of battle damage assessment-type video footage (e.g., weapons system video).

c. **MOC/Sub-MOC/Command Information Support**

(1) **Personnel.** Identify required personnel.

(2) **Equipment.** Identify additional standard equipment required to allow MOC or sub-MOC operation in the operational area. Include tentage and individual field equipment on the same basis of issue as the accompanied unit.

(3) **Services.** Include basic food and shelter, water, office space and materials, clothing, transportation, etc., including portable copying machines, facsimile machines, and automated data processing support.

(4) **Communications.** Coordinate with communications section regarding the following:

(a) Bandwidth priority to ensure timely transmission of PA and visual information products to multiple users simultaneously.

(b) Bandwidth allocation for PA products, both classified and unclassified, as well as the ability to stream live at five megabits per second.

(c) Internet access, to include unfiltered external access for information and visual information release, local area network access, and establishment and operation of

unit or contingency unclassified and classified websites, to include social media and other relevant Internet-based capabilities.

d. **Media/Media Pool Support.** Identify media support details, including facilities, messing, billeting, force protection, immunizations, emergency medical treatment, transportation and communications, access to unclassified operational information, media pools, and other support.

(1) Outline plans for support of the media pool.

(a) Daily, comprehensive, unclassified operational briefings.

(b) Access to areas of ongoing operations.

(c) Access to key command and staff personnel.

(d) Designated officer from the supported command assigned to coordinate media pool requirements.

(e) Itinerary planning to enable media pool to disperse throughout the combat area to provide coverage of operations and to regroup periodically to share information and file stories.

(2) **Required Logistic Support.** Outline supported commander responsibilities for planning logistics support for pool and escort personnel. Support should address:

(a) Existing airlift to/from the point of origin and the operational area.

(b) Theater ground, sea, and air transportation available to the media.

(c) Messing, billeting, and reimbursement requirements.

(d) Issuance of any equipment considered appropriate to the situation (e.g., helmets, canteens, protective vest, individual protective equipment).

(e) Access to communications facilities to file stories on an expedited basis.

(f) Medical support.

(g) Religious support.

5. Command and Control

Identify command relationships for PA, including CCS participation (see Appendix D, “Public Affairs’ Role in the Commander’s Communication Synchronization”).

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APPENDIX C

JOINT PUBLIC AFFAIRS TRAINING

1. Overview

a. Our nation expects its military forces to be successful in military operations. Chances of this success are greatly enhanced by the full integration of PA into every operation. This means ensuring that PA personnel are trained and the PA function is included in those activities in a manner that enables the joint force to address CCDRs' mission requirements in support of operational and strategic objectives.

b. The challenges of training in a more demanding and more financially constrained environment are likely to continue. A greater reliance on joint training events should characterize military training, meaning that PA personnel should be expected to be able to contribute in a joint environment as a normal part of their duties. Joint competency should not be seen as a bonus that only a few personnel have, but it should be expected that PA personnel are ready to step into a joint role with minimum delay.

c. In joint PA, there are several institutions that contribute directly to both the readiness of joint PA personnel and the training of the joint PA function. This appendix briefly discusses three of those institutions, their functions, and how the joint force accesses their capabilities.

2. Sources

a. **The Joint Planning Support Element (JPSE).** The JPSE is part of United States Transportation Command's Joint Enabling Capabilities Command. The JPSE rapidly deploys tailored and ready joint planners, operators, logisticians, knowledge managers, and PA and intelligence specialists to accelerate the formation and increase the effectiveness of newly formed joint force headquarters. Specifically, the JPSE delivers expertise in PA to meet evolving PA challenges and lead the information narrative within a JFC's operational theater.

(1) JPSE personnel are trained as members of a joint planning group to apply operational art, operational design, and the JPP to create a joint task force-level operation order with annex A (Task Organization).

(2) The JPSE Joint Planners Course provides training grounded in current joint doctrine. The curriculum is organized around operational design and the seven steps of the JPP. It also provides an overview of joint task force organization, an understanding of how strategic guidance shapes joint task force planning, CCS, and an appreciation of incorporating all elements of national power.

(3) The course emphasizes working within a joint planning group, interagency and multinational coordination, writing orders, and briefing senior leaders. The emphasis

on these topics requires participants to expand upon their tactical-level experiences and incorporate non-DoD contributions to mission accomplishment.

(4) The Joint Planners Course is offered quarterly and consists of 10 training days spanning a two-week period. The first phase of the course focuses on conceptual planning, operational design methodology, and JPP steps 1 and 2. The second phase of the course focuses on detailed planning and incorporating conceptual products into JPP steps 3-7. At the end of the course, students are required to provide a complete operations order with annex A (Task Organization) and provide a COA decision brief to a senior JPSE leader. The entire course is driven by a notional deterrence and foreign humanitarian assistance scenario.

(5) The JPSE also delivers recurring internal training, and when space is available, invites members of other units to participate.

b. Joint Staff J-7 [Joint Force Development], Deputy Director for Joint Training, Deployable Training Division (DTD)

(1) The DTD provides deployable training teams to execute worldwide support for JFCs and staffs to enhance their readiness. Joint forces request DTD support through the Joint Staff J-7, while Service components request this support through their Service channels.

(2) The DTD's task-organized teams deliver tailored training and objective analysis to joint and combined force headquarters and their components to enhance operational readiness and inform joint force development.

(3) PA observer trainers support the DTD by providing PA perspectives, observations, and training on all aspects of mission planning and execution, not only to PA training audiences but also cross-functionally, to ensure that PA is integrated into all aspects of joint force readiness. They provide feedback to counterparts, including individual and collective training, and collect and share observations and best practices to inform future operations planning as well as subsequent focus papers and doctrine.

APPENDIX D

PUBLIC AFFAIRS' ROLE IN COMMANDER'S COMMUNICATION SYNCHRONIZATION

1. The proactive release of accurate information to domestic and international audiences puts joint operations in context, facilitates informed perceptions about military operations, undermines adversarial propaganda, and helps achieve national, strategic, and operational objectives. JFCs' use of public information as a warfighting capability for operational advantage against adversaries in support of strategic objectives should be routinely utilized as the information joint function is implemented. In addition to informing national and international audiences, and potentially affecting adversaries' decision calculus, public information can also impact adversaries' ability to influence US audiences. This means PA is a key component of the JFC's communication synchronization process, execution, and assessment.
2. A JFC can use the CCS process to coordinate and synchronize communication (i.e., themes, messages, images) and actions (i.e., planning, deployments, operations) to protect the integrity and consistency of the joint force's communications and align them with the broader national strategic narrative.
3. Whether the commander uses the CCS process or another, PAOs should ensure public information considerations are incorporated into annex Y (Commander's Communication Strategy), which includes discussion of the CCS themes, subsequent messages and to achieve the CCS objective(s) throughout the area of responsibility and regarding global impact. This requires close collaboration and alignment with the other information forces (see Chapter II, "Responsibilities and Relationships," for more on information forces).

For more information on annex Y (Commander's Communication Strategy), see CJCSM 3130.03, Planning and Execution Formats and Guidance.

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APPENDIX E REFERENCES

The development of JP 3-61 is based upon the following primary references:

1. Department of Defense Publications

- a. DoDD 5105.74, *Defense Media Activity (DMA)*.
- b. DoDD 5122.05, *Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs (ATSD[PA])*.
- c. DoDD 5400.07, *DoD Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Program*.
- d. DoDI 5040.02, *Visual Information (VI)*.
- e. DoDI 5120.20, *American Forces Network Program*.
- f. DoDI 5122.08, *Use of DoD Transportation Assets for Public Affairs Purposes*.
- g. DoDI 5200.01, *DoD Information Security Program and Protection of Sensitive Compartmented Information (SCI)*.
- h. DoDI 5230.09, *Clearance of DoD Information for Public Release*.
- i. DoDI 5230.29, *Security and Policy Review of DoD Information for Public Release*.
- j. DoDI 5400.13, *Public Affairs (PA) Operations*.
- k. DoDI 5400.14, *Procedures for Joint Public Affairs Operations*.
- l. DoDI 5400.17, *Official Use of Social Media for Public Affairs Purposes*.
- m. DoDI 5405.03, *Development, Submission, and Approval of Proposed Public Affairs Guidance (PPAG)*.
- n. DoDI 5410.19, Volume 1, *Community Outreach Activities: Policy Overview and Evaluation Procedures*.
- o. DoDI 8170.01, *Online Information Management and Electronic Messaging*.
- p. DoD 5400.11-R, *Department of Defense Privacy Program*.
- q. *The Joint Travel Regulations*.
- r. *Department of Defense Visual Information Style Guide*.

2. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Publications

- a. CJCSI 1301.01G, *Joint Individual Augmentation Procedures*.
- b. CJCSI 3150.25H, *Joint Lessons Learned Program*.
- c. CJCSI 3205.01D, *Joint Combat Camera (COMCAM)*.
- d. CJCSI 3213.01D, *Joint Operations Security*.
- e. CJCSM 3130.03, *Joint Planning and Execution Formats and Guidance*.
- f. JP 1, Volume 1, *Joint Warfighting*.
- g. JP 2-0, *Joint Intelligence*.
- h. JP 3-0, *Joint Campaigns and Operations*.
- i. JP 3-04, *Information in Joint Operations*.
- j. JP 3-27, *Joint Homeland Defense*.
- k. JP 3-28, *Defense Support of Civil Authorities*.
- l. JP 3-55, *Joint Operations Security*.
- m. JP 3-57, *Civil-Military Operations*.
- n. JP 5-0, *Joint Planning*.
- o. JP 6-0, *Joint Communications*.

APPENDIX F

ADMINISTRATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

1. User Comments

Users in the field are highly encouraged to submit comments on this publication using the Joint Doctrine Feedback Form located at: https://jdeis.js.mil/jdeis/jel/jp_feedback_form.pdf and e-mail it to: js.pentagon.j7.mbx.jedd-support@mail.mil. These comments should address content (accuracy, usefulness, consistency, and organization), writing, and appearance.

2. Authorship

The lead agent and Joint Staff doctrine sponsor for this publication is Joint Staff, Public Affairs.

3. Supersession

This publication supersedes JP 3-61, *Public Affairs*, 19 August 2016.

4. Change Recommendations

a. To provide recommendations for urgent and/or routine changes to this publication, please complete the Joint Doctrine Feedback Form located at: https://jdeis.js.mil/jdeis/jel/jp_feedback_form.pdf and e-mail it to: js.pentagon.j7.mbx.jedd-support@mail.mil.

b. When a Joint Staff directorate submits a proposal to the CJCS that would change source document information reflected in this publication, that directorate will include a proposed change to this publication as an enclosure to its proposal. The Services and other organizations are requested to notify the Joint Staff J-7 when changes to source documents reflected in this publication are initiated.

5. Lessons Learned

The Joint Lessons Learned Program's (JLLP's) primary objective is to enhance joint force readiness and effectiveness by contributing to improvements in doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership and education, personnel, facilities, and policy. The Joint Lessons Learned Information System (JLLIS) is the DOD system of record for lessons learned and facilitates the collection, tracking, management, sharing, collaborative resolution, and dissemination of lessons learned to improve the development and readiness of the joint force. The JLLP integrates with joint doctrine through the joint doctrine development process by providing insights and lessons learned derived from operations, events, and exercises. As these inputs are incorporated into joint doctrine, they become institutionalized for future use, a major goal of the JLLP. Insights and lessons learned are routinely sought and incorporated into draft JPs throughout formal staffing of the development process. The JLLIS Website can be found at <https://www.jllis.mil> (NIPRNET) or <http://www.jllis.smil.mil> (SIPRNET).

6. Releasability

This publication is not for public release. It is available on demand to holders of a DoD common access card, and upon request to employees and contractors of the United States Government to include members and staff of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches. In the interest of furthering US national security and assisting allies and partners, foreign governments and international defense organizations desiring a copy of joint publications should make their request through their respective foreign liaison officer assigned to the Joint Staff (if applicable), the United States defense attaché or security assistance office in their country, or the appropriate United States combatant command. Requestors of joint doctrine should route their requisition to the Joint Staff J-7, Joint Education and Doctrine Division (js.pentagon.j7.mbx.jedd-support@mail.mil).

7. Printing and Distribution

a. This publication is not approved for public release. Any reproduction or distribution of this this publication must be in line with the releasability statement above. This publication may be locally reproduced for use within combatant commands, Services, National Guard Bureau, Joint Staff, and combat support agencies; however, its distribution must align with the releasability statement above.

b. The Joint Staff does not print hard copies of JPs for distribution. An electronic version of this JP is available on:

(1) NIPRNET Joint Electronic Library Plus (JEL+) at <https://jdeis.js.mil/jdeis/index.jsp> (limited to .mil and .gov users with a DOD common access card) and

(2) SIPRNET JEL+ at <https://jdeis.js.smil.mil/jdeis/index.jsp>.

GLOSSARY
PART I—SHORTENED WORD FORMS (ABBREVIATIONS, ACRONYMS,
AND INITIALISMS)

AI	artificial intelligence
CCDR	combatant commander
CCMD	combatant command
CCS	commander's communication synchronization
CJCSI	Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff instruction
CJCSM	Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff manual
COA	course of action
COMCAM	combat camera
CONOPS	concept of operations
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DoD	Department of Defense
DoDD	Department of Defense directive
DoDI	Department of Defense instruction
DOS	Department of State
DSCA	defense support of civil authorities
DTD	Deployable Training Division
ESF	emergency support function
EXORD	execute order
HN	host nation
IE	information environment
J-2	intelligence directorate of a joint staff
JFC	joint force commander
JIC	joint information center
JP	joint publication
JPP	joint planning process
JPSE	Joint Planning Support Element (USTRANSCOM)
KLE	key leader engagement
MISO	military information support operations
MOC	media operations center
NGO	nongovernmental organization
NICCL	National Incident Communications Conference Line
NRF	National Response Framework
NSC	National Security Council

OE	operational environment
OIE	operations in the information environment
OPLAN	operation plan
OPSEC	operations security
OSD	Office of the Secretary of Defense
PA	public affairs
PAG	public affairs guidance
PAO	public affairs officer
PPAG	proposed public affairs guidance
US	United States
USG	United States Government

PART II—TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

1. JP 3-61, *Joint Public Affairs*, 8 January 2025, Active Terms and Definitions

audience. In public affairs, a broadly defined group that contains stakeholders or key segments of the public relevant to military operations. (Approved for incorporation into the DoD Dictionary.)

combat camera. Service-designated units capable of providing directed visual information during military operations. Also called **COMCAM**. (Approved for incorporation into the DoD Dictionary.)

commander's communication synchronization. A process to coordinate and synchronize narratives, themes, messages, images, operations, and actions to ensure their integrity and consistency to the lowest tactical level. Also called **CCS**. (Approved for incorporation into the DoD Dictionary.)

command information. Communication by a military organization for an internal audience. Also called **internal information**. (Approved for incorporation into the DoD Dictionary.)

community engagement. Public affairs activities that support the relationship between military and civilian communities. (DoD Dictionary. Source: JP 3-61)

external audience. In public affairs, all people who are not United States military members, Department of Defense civilian employees, and their immediate families. (DoD Dictionary. Source: JP 3-61)

internal audience. In public affairs, United States military members and Department of Defense civilian employees and their immediate families. (DoD Dictionary. Source: JP 3-61)

media operations center. A facility established by the commander to serve as the focal point for the interface between the military and the media. Also called **MOC**. (Approved for incorporation into the DoD Dictionary.)

media pool. A limited number of news media who represent a larger number of news media organizations for purposes of news gathering and sharing of material during a specified activity. (DoD Dictionary. Source: JP 3-61)

message. A narrowly focused communication directed at a specific audience to support a specific theme. (DoD Dictionary. Source: JP 3-61)

official information. Information that is owned by, produced for or by, or is subject to the control of the United States Government. (DoD Dictionary. Source: JP 3-61)

public affairs. Communication activities with external and internal audiences. Also called **PA.** (DoD Dictionary. Source: JP 3-61)

public information. In public affairs, information of a military nature approved for public release. (Approved for incorporation into the DoD Dictionary.)

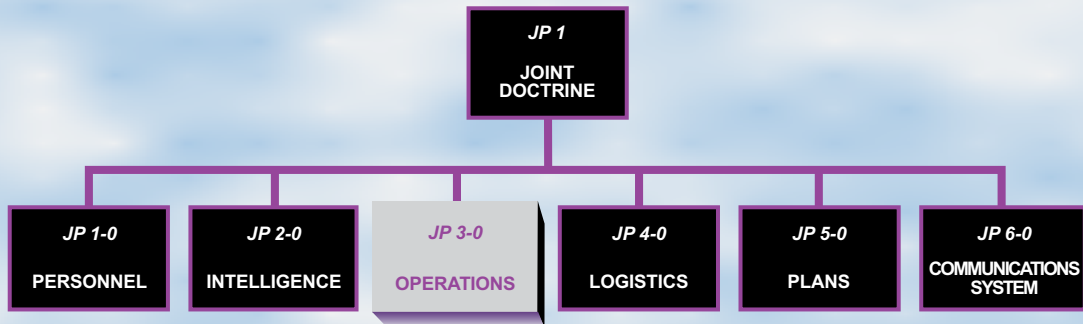
security review. In public affairs, the process of reviewing information and products prior to public release to ensure the material does not jeopardize ongoing or future operations. (Approved for incorporation into the DoD Dictionary.)

stakeholder. In public affairs, an individual or group that is directly impacted by military operations, actions, or outcomes, and whose interests motivate them toward action. (Approved for incorporation into the DoD Dictionary.)

2. Terms Removed from the DoD Dictionary

- **Supersession of JP 3-61, *Public Affairs*, 19 August 2016:** Joint Public Affairs Support Element; public; public affairs assessment; public affairs guidance; visual information

JOINT DOCTRINE PUBLICATIONS HIERARCHY



All joint publications are organized into a comprehensive hierarchy as shown in the chart above. **Joint Publication (JP) 3-61** is in the **Operations** series of joint doctrine publications. The diagram below illustrates an overview of the development process:

